

In Praise of Sailors



IN
PRAISE
OF
Sailors



*I will go back to the great sweet mother, —
Mother and lover of men, the Sea.
I will go down to her, I and none other,
Close with her, kiss her, and mix her with me;
Cling to her, strive with her, hold her fast;
O fair white mother, in days long past
Born without sister, born without brother,
Set free my soul as thy soul is free.*

HOWARD PYLE / ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

A NAUTICAL ANTHOLOGY OF



ART, POETRY, AND PROSE

IN PRAISE OF Sailors

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*This book is dedicated to the
WARDEN FAMILY
who for five generations have found delight
and wonder upon the sea*



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Preface

The chroniclers of ocean voyages—writers like Dana, Conrad, Melville, and MacBride—were more often narrators than philosophers. Yet scattered through their works are statements and stories which, when taken as a whole, represent a set of life-values born of the sea. These authors viewed commerce as an honorable profession; a ship as a living creation of man; and life as risk, with achievement the hard-won reward. To them, a crew must have courage, skill, and endurance, and its captain must be intelligent, experienced, practical, principled, and enterprising—a charismatic, iron-willed, lion-hearted leader of men.

That life on the sea is different from life on land is a recurrent theme. Comparing landmen to seamen, Edwin James Brady writes in "You and Us":

*You had your share of doin'—
You had your share to do—
But you had wives for wooin',
An' homes an' kiddies too.
You heard the chink o' glasses,
You heard the laugh o' lasses,
Had time to rest and play,
To let your racked souls borrow,
In promise of To-Morrow,
Some comfort for To-Day.*

*But Us! We crouched together
'Longside the weather-rail,
An' saw the howlin' weather
Slog down the stingin' hail;
We heard dark Legions shoutin'
When Davy Jones was floutin'
Our souls—give up for dead,
With brine-cut, bleedin' faces,
We manned the weather-braces
When You were safe abed.*

Finally, sailors take fierce pride in their ships. And for them the greatest of all sailing vessels were the clipper ships. "These clipper

ships of the early 1850's were built of wood in shipyards from Rockland in Maine to Baltimore. Their architects, like poets who transmute nature's message into song, obeyed what wind and wave had taught them, to create the noblest of all sailing vessels, and the most beautiful creations of man in America. With no extraneous ornament except a figurehead, a bit of carving and a few lines of gold leaf, their one purpose of speed over the great ocean routes was achieved by perfect balance of spars and sails to the curving lines of the smooth black hull; and this harmony of mass, form and color was practiced to the music of dancing waves and of brave winds whistling in the rigging. These were our Gothic cathedrals, our Parthenon." It was ships like these, and their crews, which inspired our golden age of marine art and literature.

...

The voyages of sailors dramatize how great is man's courage, how small his wants, and how magnificent his efforts and accomplishments. To capture the spirit and zest of life aboard ship, this book combines marine art and literature, matching each page of poetry or prose with an appropriate illustration. The artists and writers represented span a period of one hundred and fifty years. Since they never collaborated, you may find an occasional inconsistency in chronology, geography, or nautical detail between words and pictures. Still, if these pages transport you to sea in an armchair, they have accomplished their task.

Together the words and pictures tell the story of a voyage, highlighting moments of fellowship, work, adventure, or danger in the lives of sailors. The time of this story is the second half of the nineteenth century. The journey is around Cape Horn to exotic China and back. The purpose—a lasting salute to the intrepid sailor and his ship.

H.W.W.

* To maintain a continuous narrative throughout the book, I have provided a chapter heading for each two-page spread, with a footnote giving the names of artists and authors. The footnote lists the artist's name first and the author's second, separated by a slash. In cases where more than one illustration or passage of prose appears on facing pages, the artists are identified from left to right and the authors in the order given.

All other facts, including the full titles of illustrations and text selections, their sources, and other credits, are contained in the Acknowledgments section.



The Sea Belongs to Us All

The sea belongs to us all, and every aspect of it, from halcyon calm to howling hurricane, is fraught with beauty. In these pages I am trying to share with the reader what the sea has meant to me; to pass on to another generation the delight that salt water affords to those who will take the trouble to learn sea lore. To ply, unhurried, the blue deeps, or skirt the shining margents of the land, communing with the element whence life sprang, hearing no other sound but the plash of oar, the flap of sail, the whistling of wind in the rigging, and the swish and gurgle of cloven waves, revives one's strength and refreshes one's spirit. Here, the tiniest lad sailing a dinghy becomes partner to the great navigators and discoverers of history; here, too, borrowing St.-John Perse's bold metaphor, unity between earth and heaven is recovered, truth is brought to light like the flash of a steel sword blade drawn out of its sheath; and we, the guests, can share the same supper with our Host.



In Praise of Sailors

*Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea
Loves t'have his sails fill'd with a lusty wind,
Even till his sail-yards tremble, his masts crack,
And his rapt ship run on her side so low
That she drinks water, and her keel plows air;
There is no danger to a man that knows
What life and death is; there's not any law
Exceeds his knowledge; neither is it lawful
That he should stoop to any other law.
He goes before them, and commands them all,
That to himself is a law rational.*

Roadways

One road leads to London,
One road runs to Wales;
My road leads me seawards
To the white dipping sails.

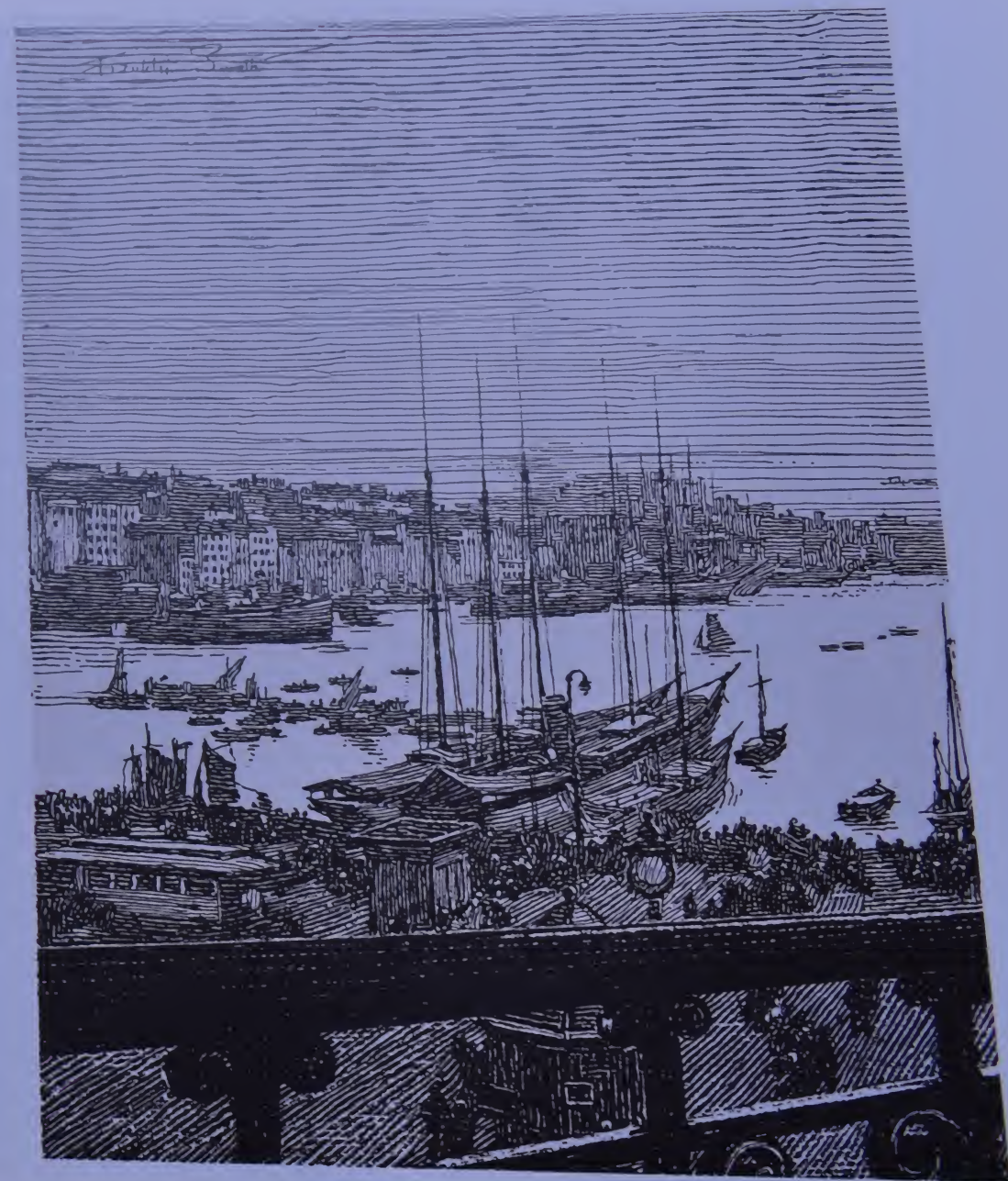
One road leads to the river,
As it goes singing slow;
My road leads to shipping,
Where the bronzed sailors go.

Leads me, lures me, calls me
To salt green tossing sea;
A road without earth's road-dust
Is the right road for me.

A wet road heaving, shining,
And wild with seagulls' cries,
A mad salt sea-wind blowing
The salt spray in my eyes.

My road calls me, lures me
West, east, south, and north;
Most roads lead men homewards,
My road leads me forth

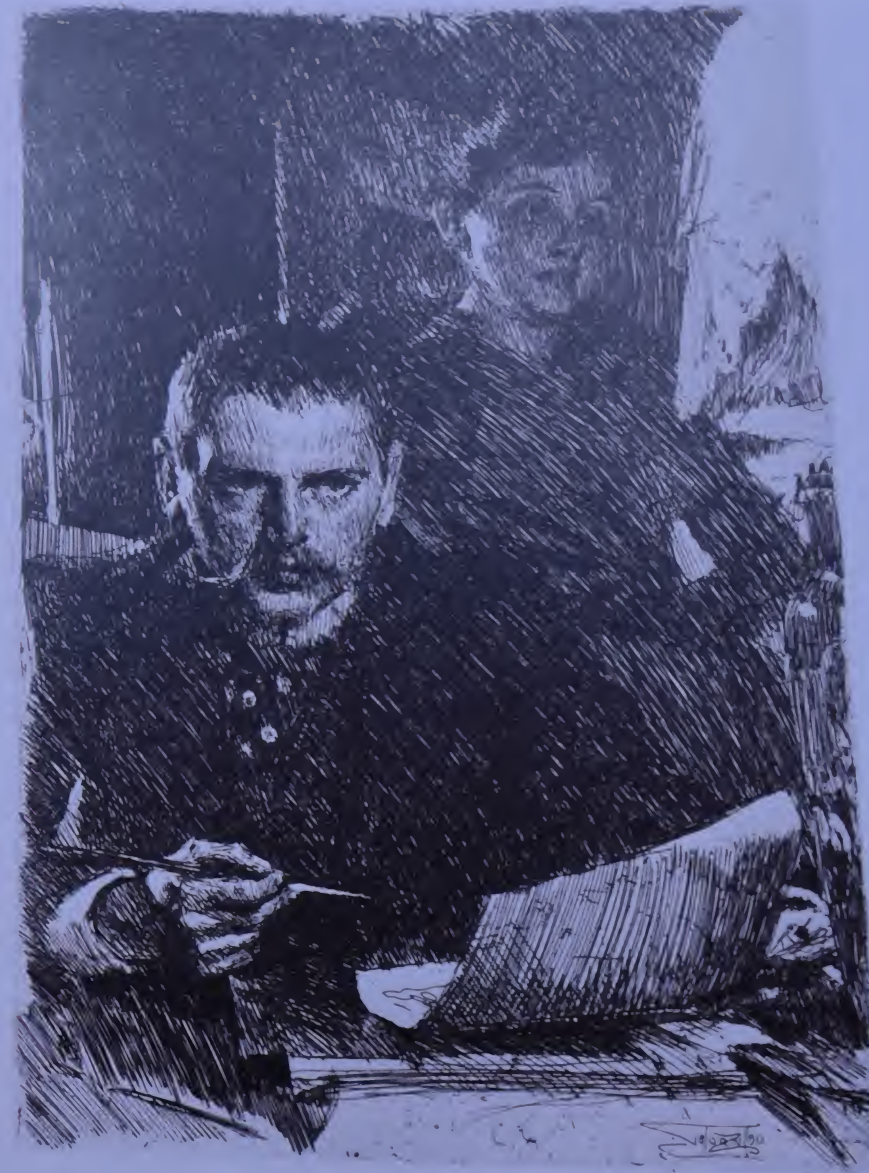
To add more miles to the tally
Of grey miles left behind,
In quest of that one beauty
God put me here to find.

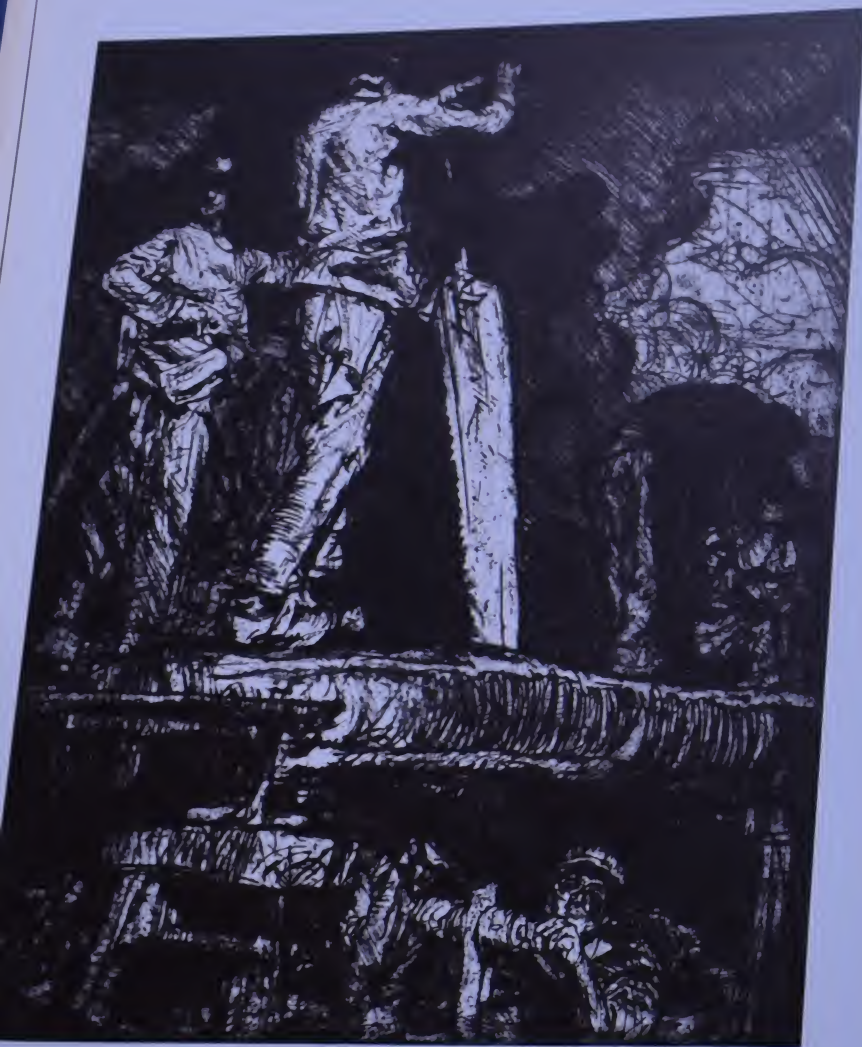


The Building of a Ship

*"Build me straight, O worthy Master!
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster.
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"*

*The merchant's word
Delighted the Master heard;
For his heart was in his work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every Art.
A quiet smile played round his lips,
As the eddies and dimples of the tide
Play round the bows of ships,
That steadily at anchor ride.
And with a voice that was full of glee,
He answered, "Ere long we will launch
A vessel as goodly, and strong, and staunch,
As ever weathered a wintry sea!"
And first with nicest skill and art,
Perfect and finished in every part,
A little model the Master wrought,
Which should be to the larger plan
What the child is to the man,
Its counterpart in miniature;
That with a hand more swift and sure
The greater labor might be brought
To answer to his inward thought.*





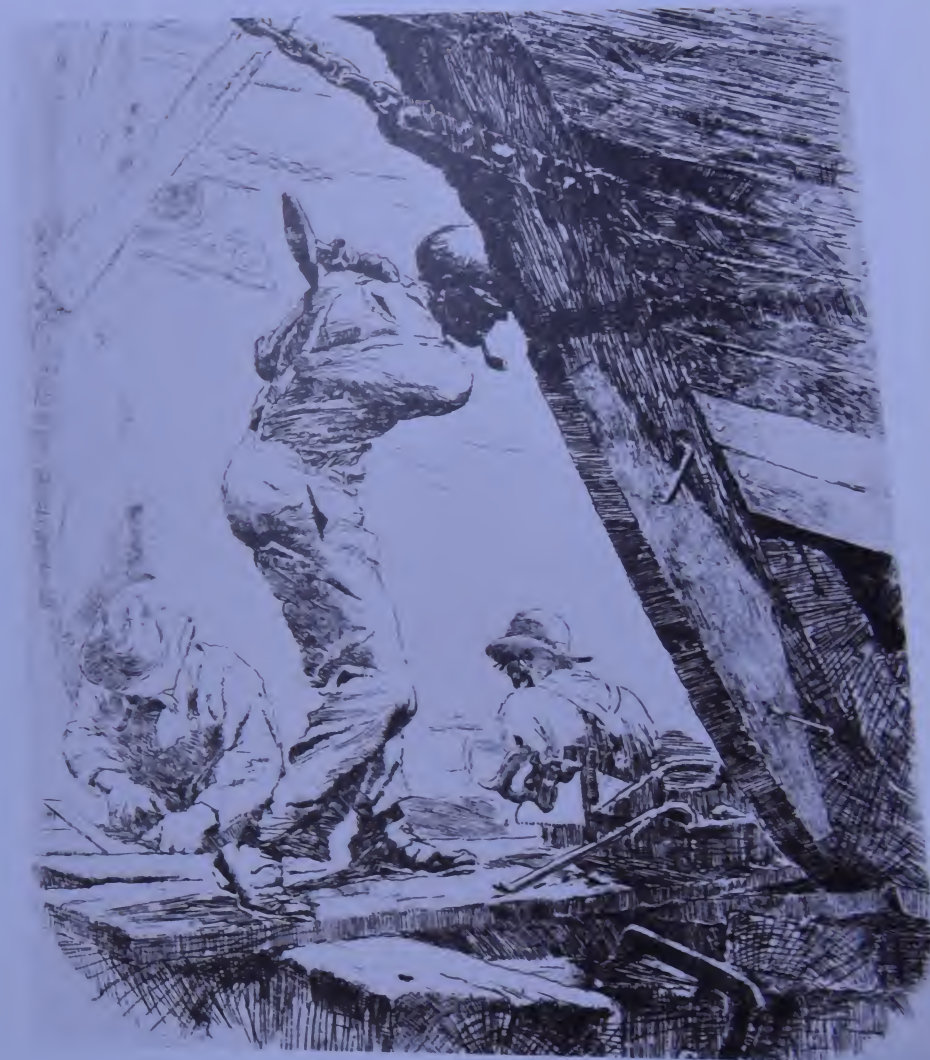
Day by Day the Vessel Grew

"Thus," said he, "will we build this ship!
Lay square the blocks upon the slip,
And follow well this plan of mine,
Choose the timbers with greatest care;
Of all that is unsound beware;
For only what is sound and strong
To this vessel shall belong.
Cedar of Maine and Georgia pine
Here together shall combine.
A goodly frame, and a goodly fame,
And the UNION be her name!"

Thus with the rising of the sun
Was the noble task begun,
And soon throughout the ship-yard's bounds
Were heard the intermingled sounds
Of axes and of mallets, plied
With vigorous arms on every side;
Plied so deftly and so well,
That, ere the shadows of evening fell,
The keel of oak for a noble ship,
Scarfed and bolted, straight and strong,
Was lying ready, and stretched along
The blocks, well placed upon the slip.
Happy, thrice happy, every one
Who sees his labor well begun,
And not perplexed and multiplied,
By idly waiting for time and tide!

Day by day the vessel grew,
With timbers fashioned strong and true,
Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee,
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,
A skeleton ship rose up to view!
And around the bows and along the side
The heavy hammers and mallets plied,
Till after many a week, at length,
Wonderful for form and strength,
Sublime in its enormous bulk,
Loomed aloft the shadowy hulk!
And around it columns of smoke, upbreathing,
Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething
Caldron, that glowed,
And overflowed
With the black tar, heated for the sheathing.
And amid the clamors
Of clattering hammers,
He who listened heard now and then
The song of the Master and his men:—

"Build me straight, O worthy Master,
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"



The Figurehead

*And at the bows an image stood,
By a cunning artist carved in wood,
With robes of white, that far behind
Seemed to be fluttering in the wind.
It was not shaped in a classic mould,
Not like a Nymph or Goddess of old,
Or Naiad rising from the water,
But modelled from the Master's daughter!
On many a dreary and misty night,
'T will be seen by the rays of the signal light,
Speeding along through the rain and the dark,
Like a ghost in its snow-white sark,
The pilot of some phantom bark,
Guiding the vessel, in its flight,
By a path none other knows aright!*



The Launching

All is finished! and at length
Has come the bridal day
Of beauty and of strength
To-day the vessel shall be launched!
With fleecy clouds the sky is blanch'd,
And o'er the bay,
Slowly, in all his splendors dight,
The great sun rises to behold the sight—
The ocean old,
Centuries old—
Strong as youth, and as uncontrolled,
Paces restless to and fro,
Up and down the sands of gold,
His beating heart is not at rest,
And far and wide,
With ceaseless flow,
His beard of snow
Heaves with the heaving of his breast,
He waits impatient for his bride—
There she stands,
With her foot upon the sands,

*Decked with flags and streamers gay—
In honor of her marriage day—
Her sun-white signals fluttering, blending,
Round her like a veil descending,
Ready to be
The bride of the gray old sea.*

The worthy pastor—
The shepherd of that wandering flock,
That has the ocean for its fold,
That has the vessel for its fold,
Leaping ever from rock to rock—
Spoke, with accents mild and clear,
Words of warning, words of cheer . . .
Then the Master,
With a gesture of command,
Waved his hand,
And at the word,
Loud and sudden there was heard,
All around them and below,
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,
Knocking away the shores and spurs,
And see! she stirs!
She starts, —she moves, —she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!



Wanderlust

*A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels;
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand.*

*Oh I'll be going, leaving the noises of the street,
To where a lifting foresail-foot is yanking at the sheet;
To a windy, tossing anchorage where yavels and ketches ride,
Oh I'll be going, going, until I meet the tide.*

*And first I'll hear the sea-wind, the mewling of the gulls,
The clucking, sucking of the sea about the rusty hulls,
The songs at the capstan in the hooker warping out,
And then the heart of me'll know I'm there or thereabout.*

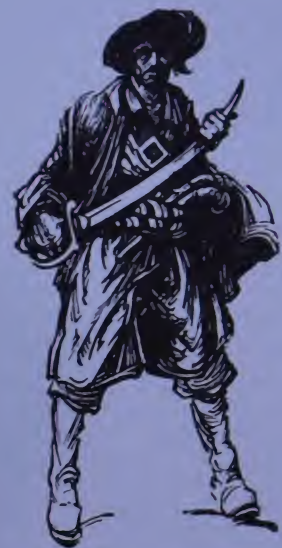
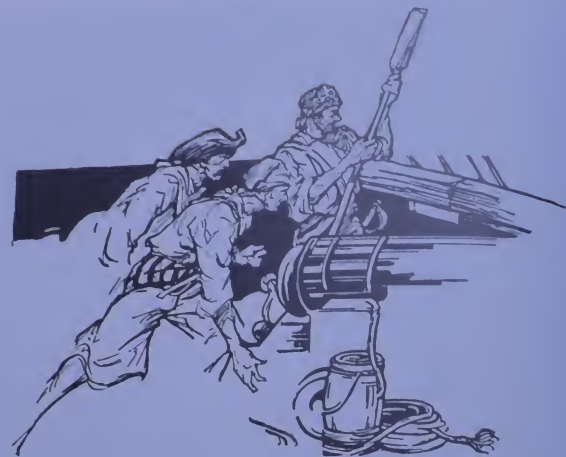
*Oh I am tired of brick and stone, the heart of me is sick,
For windy green, unquiet sea, the realm of Moby Dick;
And I'll be going, going, from the roaring of the wheels,
For a wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels.*



Yarn of a Former Jolly Roger-1

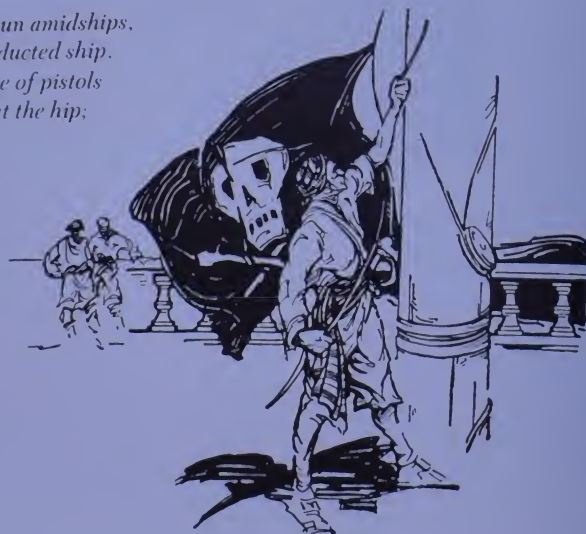
*We were schooner-rigged and rakish, with a long and lissome hull.
And we flew the pretty colours of the cross-bones and the skull;
We'd a big black Jolly Roger flapping grimly at the fore.
And we sailed the Spanish Water in the happy days of yore.*



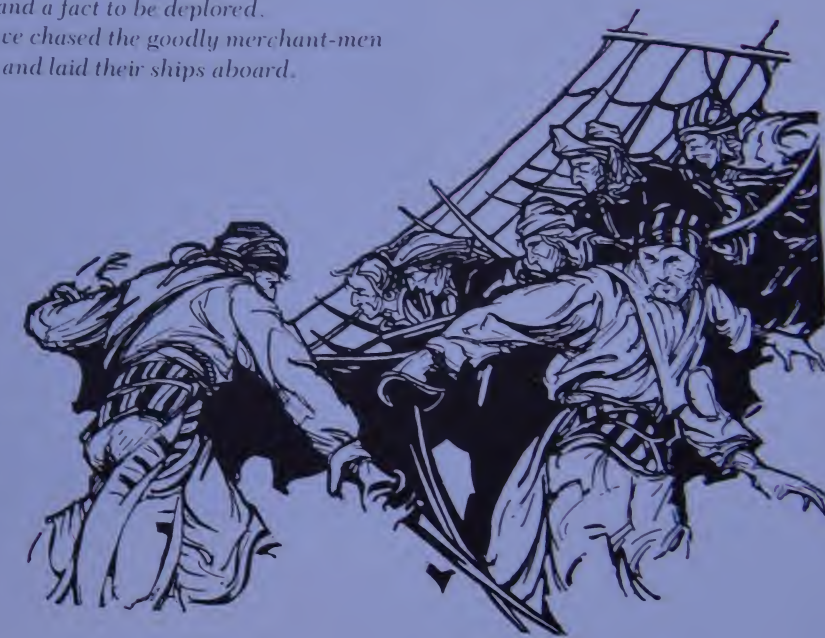


Yarn of a Former Jolly Roger - II

*We'd a long brass gun amidships,
like a well conducted ship.
We had each a brace of pistols
and a cutlass at the hip;*



*It's a point which tells against us,
and a fact to be deplored.
But we chased the goodly merchant-men
and laid their ships aboard.*



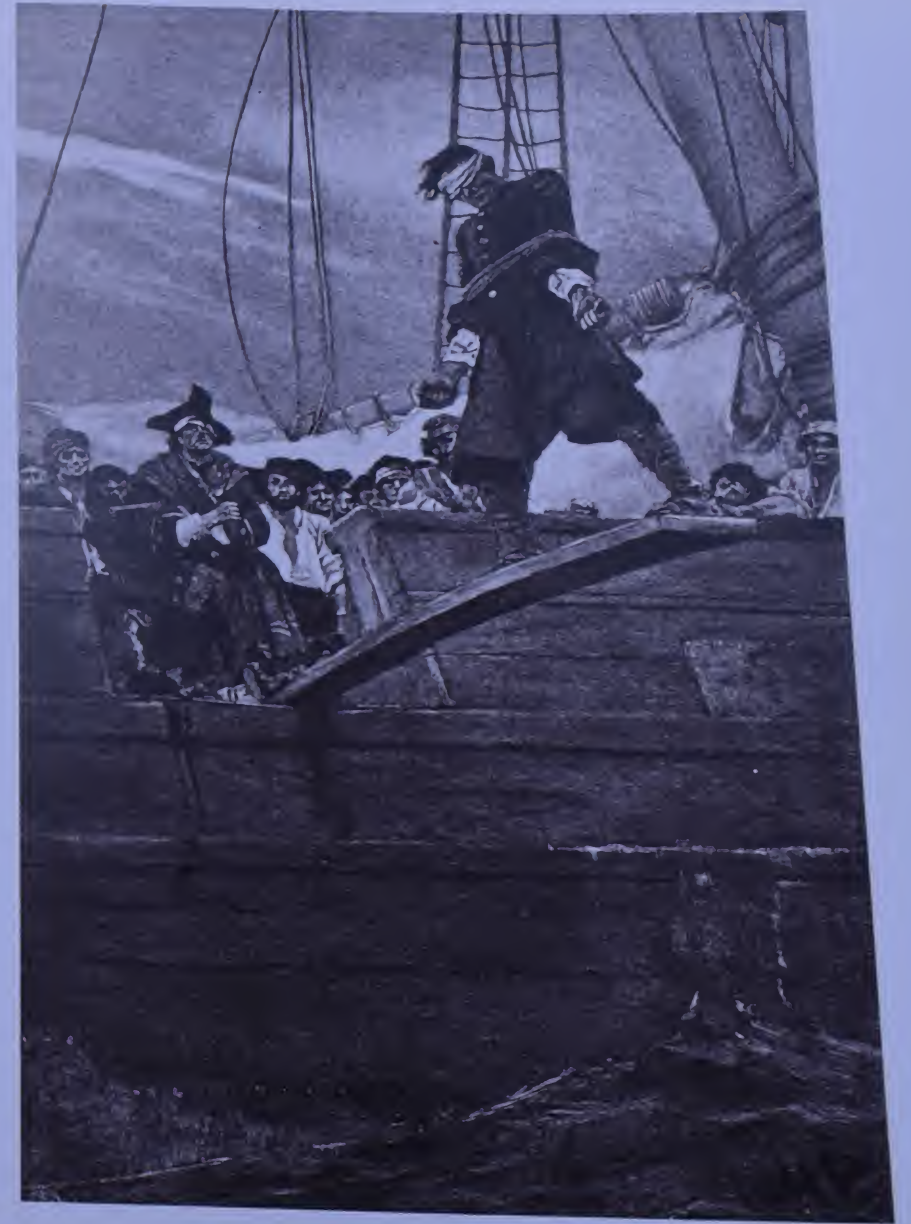
Yarn of a Former Jolly Roger—III

*Then the dead men fouled the scuppers and the wounded filled the chains.
And the paint-work all was spatter-dashed with other people's brains.
She was boarded, she was looted, she was scuttled till she sank,
And the pale survivors left us by the medium of the plank.*

*O! then it was (while standing by the taffrail on the poop)
We could hear the drowning folk lament the absent chicken-coop;
Then, having washed the blood away, we'd little else to do
Than to dance a quiet hornpipe as the old salts taught us to.*

*O! the fiddle on the fo'c's'le, and the slapping naked soles,
And the genial "Down the middke, Jake, and curtsey when she rolls!"
With the silver seas around us and the pale moon overhead,
And the look-out not a-looking and his pipe-bowl glowing red.*

*Ah! the pig-tailed, quidding pirates and the pretty pranks we played,
All have since been put a stop-to by the naughty Board of Trade;
The schooners and the merry crews are laid away to rest,
A little south the sunset in the Islands of the Blest.*





The Sea-Wife

*There dwells a wife by the Northern Gate,
And a wealthy wife is she;
She breeds a breed o' rovin' men
And casts them over sea.*

*And some are drowned in deep water,
And some in sight o' shore,
And word goes back to the weary wife
And ever she sends more.*

*For since that wife had gate or gear,
Or hearth or garth or field,
She willed her sons to the white harvest,
And that is a bitter yield.*

*She wills her sons to the wet ploughing,
To ride the horse of tree,
And syne her sons come back again
Far-spent from out the sea.*

*The good wife's sons come home again
With little into their hands,
But the lore of men that ha' dealt with men
In the new and naked lands;*

*But the faith of men that have brothered men
By more than easy breath,
And the eyes o' men that have read with men
In the open books of Death.*

*Rich are they, rich in wonders seen,
But poor in the goods o' men;
So what they ha' got by the skin of their teeth
They sell for their teeth again.*

*For whether they lose to the naked life
Or win to their hearts' desire,
They tell it all to the weary wife
That nods beside the fire.*

*Her hearth is wide to every wind
That makes the white ash spin;
And tide and tide and 'tween the tides
Her sons go out and in;*

*(Out with great mirth that do desire
Hazard of trackless ways,
In with content to wait their watch
And warm before the blaze);*

*And some return by failing light,
And some in waking dream,
For she hears the heels of the dripping ghosts
That ride the rough roof-beam.*

*Home, they come home from all the ports,
The living and the dead;
The good wife's sons come home again
For her blessing on their head!*



Up Anchor and Away to Rio

Solo Oh— say was you ev - er in Ri - o Grande: *Chorus* Way,—you Ri - o. *Solo* Oh,
Chorus wa - s you ev - er o - n that strand? For we're bound to the Ri - o
Grande: And a - w — a — y Ri — o, Way— you Ri - o, Sing
fare ye well my bon-ny young girls, For we're bound to the Ri - o Grande.

Oh, New York town is no place for me;
Way, you Rio!
I'll pack up my bag and go to sea,

Now, you Bowery ladies, we'll let you know,
Way, you Rio!
We're bound to the south' ard—O Lord, let her go!

We'll sell our salt cod for molasses and rum,
Way, you Rio!
And get home again 'fore Thanksgiving has come.

Sing good-by to Nellie and good-by to Sue,
Way, you Rio!
And you who are listening, good-by to you.

CHORUS

For we're bound to the Rio Grande:
And away, Rio,
Way, you Rio,
Sing fare ye well my bonny young girls
For we're bound to the Rio Grande.



Setting Forth-1

The Paddle-tug Wrestler arrived at an hour ere flood.
Then slowly the hawser was passt and the mooring ropes slackt.
The ship moved away from her berthing, her voyage begun.

In dock, near her berth, lay the famous American ship
The R.D. Rice, lofty and lovely, with three skysail yards.
Her captain, there watching the Wanderer passing to sea,
Cried to George Currie, "I'll bet you a rosy-cheekt apple
I'll be in San 'Frisco before you": the Wanderers laught
From pride in their racer now trembling to gallop the sea.

Slowly she moved to the gateway that led to the river;
The gates were wide opened, beyond lay the fullness of flood.
There on the pierhead, the dock-gate officials and riggers,
The stevedoors and dockers and penniless seamen were bunched
Watching her ripples advance as she followed her tug.

Now as that queen of the water went out to her kingdom,
As spear-like for diving the spike of her jib-boom was poised
Over the paddle churn foam slapping weeds at the dock gates,
And slowly her gazing white woman moved forward in thought
Between the stone walls, and her boys, coiling gear, paused to watch.
A man of that muster of dockers went up to the edge,
And took off his cap with, "Three cheers for the Wanderer": then
All of those sea-beaten fellows swung caps, and their cheering
Sent the gulls mewling aloft: then George Shearer, the chief mate,
Up on her fo'c'sle, replied with "Three cheers for Pierhead, boys."
The boys and the seamen all swinging caps shouted three cheers.
A man from the pierhead jumpt into the rigging aboard.
She passt in procession of masts through the narrow dock gates.

Setting Forth—II

*Now in the river she paused as she swung through her quadrant;
Men hurried to watch her as slowly she headed for sea,
At bidding extending her loitering length of delight.
All of the power of muscle of hundreds of builders
Beating out iron and steel into straightness or curving,
All of the knowledge and cunning of hundreds of thinkers
Who make from the stubborn the swanlike and sweeping and swift,
All of the art of the brain that had seen her in vision,
Had gone to the making her perfect in beauty and strength.
Her black painted ports above black showed the curve of her sheer,
Her yellow masts raked as they rose with their burden of yards.
High, high aloft rose her skysails, and over her skysails
Bright in the sun, blowing out, blue and white, were her colours.*

Like the Eagle Free

*A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England by the lee.*

*O for a soft and gentle wind!
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
The merry men are we.*

*There's tempest in yon hornèd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud;
But hark the music, mariners!
The wind is piping loud;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.*





The Helmsman

*When, with the gale at her heel, the ship lies down and recovers —
Rolling through forty degrees, combing the stars with her tops,
What says the man at the wheel, holding her straight as she hovers
On the summits of wind-screening seas; studying her as she drops?*

*Behind him the blasts without check from the Pole to the Tropic, pursue him.
Heaving up, heaping high, slamming home, the surges he must not regard:
Beneath him the crazy wet deck, and all Ocean on end to undo him:
Above him one desperate sail, thrice-reefed but still buckling the yard!*

*Under his hand fleet the spokes and return, to be held or set free again;
And she bows and makes shift to obey their behest, till the master-wave comes
And her gunnel goes under in thunder and smokes, and she chokes in the
trough of the sea again —*

Ere she can lift and make way to its crest; and he, as he nurses her, hums! . . .

*These have so utterly mastered their work that they work without thinking;
Holding three-fifths of their brain in reserve for whatever betide.
So, when catastrophe threatens, of colic, collision or sinking,
They shunt the full gear into train, and take that small thing in their stride.*

Collision

We one day descried some shapeless object drifting at a distance. At sea, everything that breaks the monotony of the surrounding expanse attracts attention. It proved to be the mast of a ship that must have been completely wrecked, for there were the remains of handkerchiefs, by which some of the crew had fastened themselves to this spar, to prevent their being washed off by the waves. There was no trace by which the name of the ship could be ascertained. The wreck had evidently drifted about for many months, clusters of shell-fish had fastened about it, and long sea-weeds flaunted at its sides. But where, thought I, is the crew?

Their struggle has long been over—they have gone down amidst the roar of the tempest—their bones lie whitening among the caverns of the deep. Silence, oblivion, like the waves, have closed over them, and no one can tell the story of their end. What sighs have been wafted after that ship; what prayers offered up at the desired fireside of home! How often has the mistress, the wife, the mother, pored over the daily news, to catch some casual intelligence of this rover of the deep! How has expectation darkened into anxiety—anxiety into dread—and dread into despair! Alas! not one memento shall ever return for love to cherish. All that shall ever be known, is that she sailed from her port, “and was never heard of more!”

The sight of this wreck, as usual, gave rise to many dismal anecdotes. This was particularly the case in the evening, when the weather, which had hitherto been fair, began to look wild and threatening, and gave indications of one of those sudden storms that will sometimes break in upon the serenity of a summer voyage. As we sat round the dull light of a lamp, in the cabin, that made the gloom more ghastly, every one had his tale of shipwreck

and disaster. I was particularly struck with a short one related by the captain:

“As I was once sailing,” said he, “in a fine, stout ship, across the banks of Newfoundland, one of those heavy fogs that prevail in those parts rendered it impossible for us to see far ahead, even in the daytime; but at night the weather was so thick that we could not distinguish any object at twice the length of the ship. I kept lights at the mast-head, and a constant watch forward to look out for fishing smacks which are accustomed to lie at anchor on the banks. The wind was blowing a smacking breeze, and we were going at a great rate through the water. Suddenly the watch gave the alarm of ‘a sail a-head!’—it was scarcely uttered before we were upon her. She was a small schooner, at anchor, with a broadside toward us. The crew were all asleep, and had neglected to hoist a light. We struck her just amid-ships. The force, the size, the weight of our vessel, bore her down below the waves; we passed over her and were hurried on our course. As the crashing wreck was sinking beneath us, I had glimpse of two or three half-naked wretches, rushing from her cabin; they just started from their beds to be swallowed shrieking by the waves. I heard their drowning cry mingling with the wind. The blast that bore it to our ears, swept us all out of all farther hearing. I shall never forget the cry! It was some time before we could put the ship about, she was under such headway. We returned as nearly as we could guess, to the place where the smack had anchored. We cruised about for several hours in the dense fog. We fired signal-guns, and listened if we might hear the halloo of any survivors; but all was silent—we never saw or heard anything of them more.”





Destinations

*Names! The lure in names of places
Stirring thoughts of foreign faces,
Ports and palaces and steamers.
Names are ships to carry dreamers.*

*Pago-pago, Suva, Java,
Languor, lotuses and lava,
Everything a dreamer wishes,
Buried treasure, flying fishes,
Cocoanuts and kings and corals,
Pirates, pearls and pagan morals,
Rum and reefs and Christian teaching,
Gin, and jungle parrots screeching.*

*Kobe, Nikko, Yokohama,
Views of sacred Fujiyama,
Bales of silk and bowls of lacquer,
Dragons on a sugar cracker,
Temples high on pictured mountains,
Purple gold-fish, perfume fountains,
Amber, obis, geisha dances,
Almond eyes and slanted glances.*

*Places that I pray I may go,
Rio, Terra del Fuego,
Condors soaring in the Andes,
Cloying Guatemalan candies.*

*Pampas grasses, pink flamingos,
Spanish girls who call us "gringos,"
Llamas, lizards, smoking craters,
Armadillos, alligators.*

*Every name a ship with cargo,
Brass from Burmah, wheat from Fargo,
Pots and prunes and precious metal
Mined on Popocatepetl,
Chests of carved and stained catalpa,
Letters from Tegucigalpa,
Linen from an Irish shanty
For a store in Ypsilanti.*

*Sailing ship and ocean liner
Bringing stuff from Asia Minor,
Ferry boat or lazy freighter,
Folks from China or Decatur,
Mozambique or Madagascar,
Slav or Serb or savage Lascar,
Barber, Berber or Brazilian
Clad in blue or bright vermillion.*

*Fascinating names of places
Stirring thoughts of foreign faces,
Ports and palaces and steamers,
Names are ships to carry dreamers.*



Songfest

The Captain stood on the carronade—"First lieutenant," says he,
 "Send all my merry men aft here, for they must list to me;
 I haven't the gift of the gab, my sons—because I'm bred to the sea;
 That ship there is a Frenchman, who means to fight with we.
 Odds blood, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
 I've fought 'gainst every odds—but I've gain'd the victory."

"That ship there is a Frenchman, and if we don't take she,
 'Tis a thousand bullets to one, that she will capture we;
 I haven't the gift of the gab, my boys; so each man to his gun;
 If she's not mine in half an hour, I'll flog each mother's son.
 Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
 I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gain'd the victory."

We fought for twenty minutes, when the Frenchmen had enough;
 "I little thought," said he, "that your men were of such stuff."
 The captain took the Frenchman's sword, a low bow made to he;
 "I haven't the gift of the gab, monsieur, but polite I wish to be.
 Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, long as I've been to sea,
 I've fought 'gainst every odds—and I've gain'd the victory."

Our captain sent for all of us; "My merry men," said he,
 "I haven't the gift of the gab, my lads, but yet I thankful be;
 You've done your duty handsomely, each man stood to his gun;
 If you hadn't, you cillains, as sure as day, I'd have
 flogg'd each mother's son.
 Odds bobs, hammer and tongs, as long as I'm at sea,
 I'll fight 'gainst every odds—and I'll gain the victory."





Bumboats

From the quays within the town
And the coves around the bay
Came the bumboats with their produce
Plucked from off the island trees,
Hawking mangoes, coconuts and cloth,
Bananas, palm hats and live chickens—
Enough fresh victuals for a fortnight,
To be picked by a pointed finger,
Priced in sign language, and
Sold with the nod of the head
And a few tossed coins.





Port of Call

*In the harbour, in the island, in the Spanish Seas,
Are the tiny white houses and the orange trees,
And day-long, night-long, the cool and pleasant breeze
Of the steady Trade Winds blowing.*

*There is the red wine; the nutty Spanish ale,
The shuffle of the dancers, the old salt's tale,
The squeaking fiddle, and the souging in the sail
Of the steady Trade Winds blowing.*

*And o' nights there's fire-flies and the yellow moon,
And in the ghostly palm-trees the sleepy tune
Of the quiet voice calling me, the long low croon
Of the steady Trade Winds blowing.*

Let's Give the Girls a Treat

*Oh yesterday, I t'ink it was, while cruisin' down the street,
I met with Bill. — "Hullo," he says, "let's give the girls a treat."
We'd red bandanas round our necks 'n' our shrouds new rattled down,
So we filled a couple of Santy Cruz and cleared for Sailor Town.*

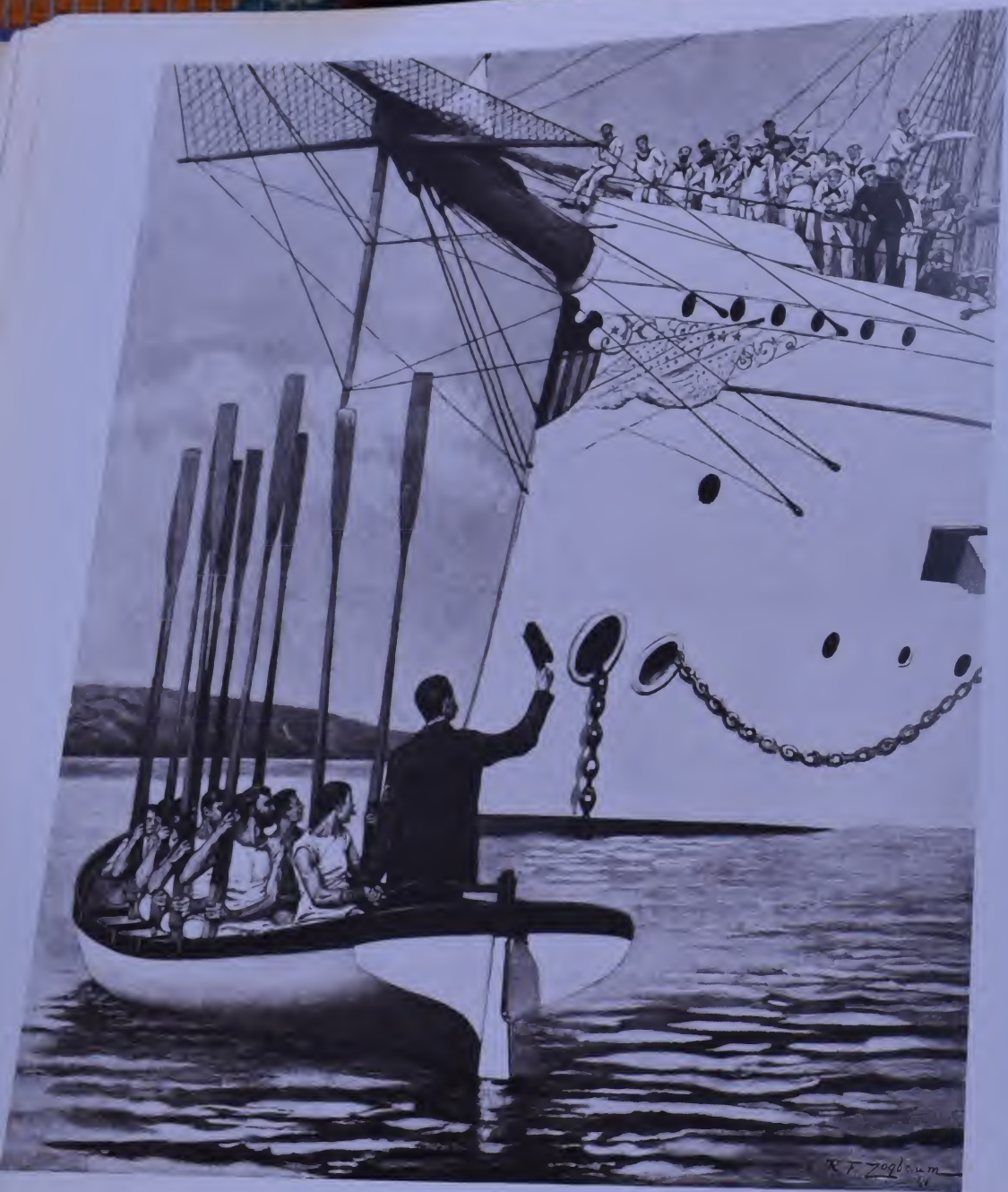
*We scooted south with a press of sail till we fetched to a caboose.
The "Sailor's Rest," by Dago Tom, alongside "Paddy's Goose."
Red curtains to the windies, ay, 'n' white sand to the floor,
And an old blind fiddler liltin' the tune of "Lowlands no more."*

*He played the "Shaking of the Sheets" 'n' the couples did advance,
Bowing, stamping, curtsying, in the shuffling of the dance;
The old floor rocked and quivered, so it struck beholders dumb,
'N' arterwards there was sweet songs 'n' good Jamaikey rum.*

*'N' there was many a merry yarn of many a merry spree
Aboard the ships with royals set a-sailing on the sea,
Yarns of the hooker, "Spindrift," her as had the clipper-bow —
"There ain't no ships," says Bill to me, "like that there hooker now."*

*When the old blind fiddler played the tune of "Pipe the Watch Below,"
The skew-eyed landlord dowsed the glim and bade us "stamp 'n' go,"
'N' we linked it home, did Bill 'n' I, adown the scattered streets,
Until we fetched to Land o' Nod atween the linen sheets.*





Harbor Race

The next morning Captain Beeder spoke to me briefly. "Do you think you can give the limeys a beating?" he asked. I remember saying something about being ready. "All right, coxon. After breakfast—and don't eat too much—row over to that coast defense ship the Polyphemus, and toss oars."

An hour after breakfast my crew ready, we rowed leisurely, coming in close to HMS Polyphemus, a coast defense ram. The gig stroked easily; we heeled for the port gangway, then swerved, and I put her under the bow of the Britisher. The people on the deck of the man-of-war had been watching us, expecting a messenger as there was no officer in the boat. When we cut forward I gave the yoke lines a tug, swinging sharply to starboard, and called "Oars!" The six long dripping blades trimmed flat, and then, when under her Union Jack, I gave the loud terse command, "Toss—oars!" Six dripping blades sprang upright; it seemed as if we had slapped the face of old Britannia. Tossing oars under the bow of a ship is the challenge for a race, an immediate race.

On board the Britisher there was electric activity. Pipes shrilled. Officers were coming up to the quarter deck. Pipes shrilled. Then the hoarse call of "Away-first whaler!" Red-faced blue jackets were tumbling into a boat. We heard the clatter of oars and the click of blocks as her falls lowered smartly. The boat hit the water with a splash, a beautiful fair-modeled hull. The officer of the deck stood on the gangway grating giving instructions to her coxswain. A voice hailed, "Lay alongside, coxswain!"

"Start is from line abreast the starboard boat boom, at 'oars.' Go when you hear a shot. Do you understand?"

"Aye, aye, sir. Where to?" I called.

"To the end of the mole, round our launch." We saw her steam pinnace puffing away toward the mole, carrying a flag. "Then back to the start abreast of our boom. Are you ready?"

"Ready, sir!" The British coxswain also answered "Ready, sir!"

We were set. Both boats dipped oars and drifted to position. I spoke to my crew. "They look tough. I'll trail them for the first mile. Then, you mugs, you will have to row. Off jumpers!" The boys suddenly slid in their oars, catching the handles under the thwart stringers. Duck jumpers came off and were tossed into the

bow. Six young, hard, bronzed torsos gleamed. The coxswain of the British boat looked at us, face stern. He was awaiting the order to take off jumpers, but it did not come. We looked like schoolboys on that fresh early morning. The course would be close to four miles. "Stand by!" I called. A shot cracked. "Way—together!" Both boats got off clean. We shot ahead, being lighter. The stroke was high, I lowered it. The British boat got her way. They were out to slaughter us. We had a look at them—it always heartens the crew to see the other boat. Our stroke eased after the first eighth mile. The Polyphemuses crept up on us. For another eighth we rowed abreast, watching them.

"Now, boys, keep set." We were cowering against a seasoned crew, a beautiful crew. They swung their sweeps with precision. In their jumpers they looked like a toy boat propelled mechanically. I kept encouraging our fellows, who could hear the boat but could not see her. The gap widened, a half-boat length, a boat length. We were nearing the launch at the mole. "Now—step her up!" Quicker, quicker, the other coxswain matching us, beat for beat, we closed the gap. The work was killing. "Everything—give everything!" We came to the launch, abreast, the launch crew cheering, Harbor craft had gathered. People were crowding on the mole, yelling. Our ship was far away. We were going back. The limey crew were a few feet ahead of us. They hung there. As we eased, they eased. Then they began to hit it up, *up, up!* And we followed. Men could not stand that pace; they eased. "Now, mugs. Kill 'em!" Our boys, glistening with sweat, their young faces set hard, their lips like tight-closed traps, bent on their oars, the beautiful rhythm of bodies, arms and legs swinging to the quick sharp dip of the blades, the gig leaping. We raced and rode abreast of the Britisher. Seeing them again threw the last ounce of vim into our boys. The stroke was murdering. We drove ahead; they clung. The Polyphemus was a half-mile away. Their coxswain was urging his men. They would make the final effort, the last heart-bursting strokes. Their launch was running abreast of them, the coxswain shouting. Harbor launches and boats from ships in port were clustered to see the finish.

Breaths short, chests heaving, arms tense, my crew gave them the St Mary's finish. Faster, faster, a rapid run of spurts dropped into the last long powerful stroke, with oars bending, blades flashing. The beat was held as we stretched out the distance between us, streaming across the finish line three lengths ahead of the straining Britishers. An incredible cheer greeted us. . . .



After the Race

Your nose is a red jelly, your mouth's a toothless wreck,
And I'm atop of you, banging your head upon the dirty deck;
And both your eyes are bunged and blind like those of a mewling pup,
For you're the juggins who caught the crab and lost the ship the Cup.

He caught a crab in the spurt home, this blushing cherub did,
And the "Craigie's" whaler slipped ahead like a cart-wheel on the skid,
And beat us fair by a boat's nose though we sweated fit to start her,
So we are playing at Nero now, and he's the Christian martyr.

And Stroke is lashing a bunch of keys to the buckle-end a belt,
And we're going to lay you over a chest and baste you till you melt.
The "Craigie" boys are beating the bell and cheering down the tier,
D'ye hear, you Port Mahone baboon, I ask you, do you hear?

The Battle's Joined

Maloney watched the battle, and his brows were bleakly set,
While with him paused and panted his Hibernian Quartette
For sure it is an evil spite, and breaking to the heart,
For Irishmen to watch a fight and not be taking part.
Then suddenly on high he soared, and tightened up his belt
"And shall we see them crush," he roared, "a brother and a Celt?
A fellow artiste needs our aid. Come on, boys, take a hand."
Then down into the mêlée dashed Maloney and his band.





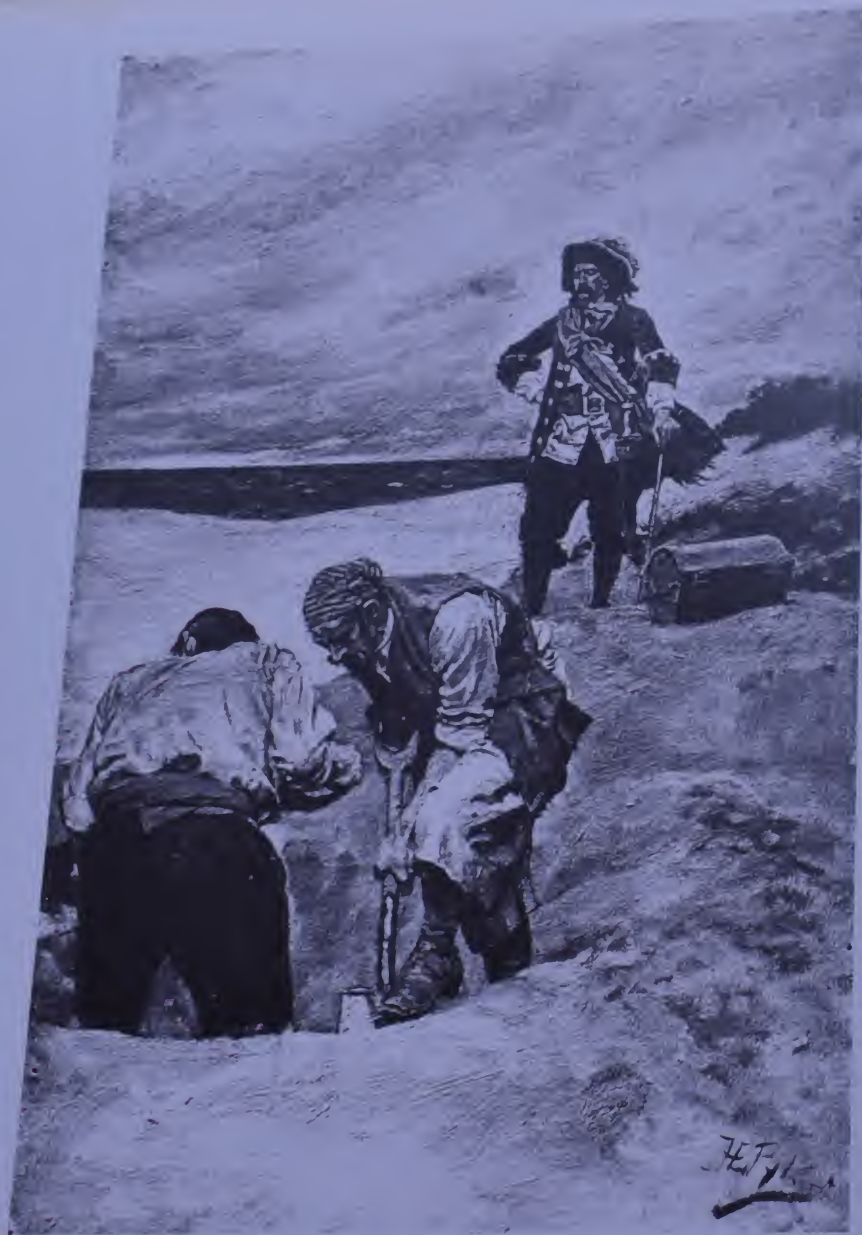
Fever Ship

*There'll be no weepin' gells ashore when our ship sails,
Nor no crews cheerin' us, standin' at the rails,
'N' no Blue Peter a-foul the royal stay,
For we've the Yellow Fever—Harry died to-day. —
It's cruel when a fo'c's'le gets the fever!*

*'N' Dick has got the fever-shakes, 'n' look what I was told
(I went to get a sack for him to keep him from the cold):
"Sir, can I have a sack?" I says, "for Dick 'e's fit to die."
"Oh, sack be shot!" the skipper says, "jest let the rotter lie!" —
It's cruel when a fo'c's'le gets the fever!*

*It's a cruel port is Santos, and a hungry land,
With rows o' graves already dug in yonder strip of sand.
'N' Dick is hollerin' up the hatch, 'e says 'e's goin' blue,
His pore teeth are chattering, 'n' what's a man to do? —
It's cruel when a fo'c's'le gets the fever!*

GEORGE GALE / JOHN MASEFIELD



Fever Talk- II



*The moon came white and ghostly as we laid the treasure down,
There was gear there'd make a beggarman as rich as Lima Town.
Copper charms and silver trinkets from the chests of Spanish crews,
Gold doubloons and double moydores, louis d'ors and portagues.*

*Clumsy yellow-metal earrings from the Indians of Brazil,
Uncut emeralds out of Rio, bezoar stones from Guayaquil;
Silver, in the crude and fashioned, pots of old Arica bronze,
Jewels from the bones of Incas desecrated by the Dons.*

*We smoothed the place with mattocks, and we took and blazed the tree,
Which marks yon where the gear is hid that none will ever see,
And we laid aboard the ship again, and south away we steers,
Through the loud surf of Los Muertos which is beating in my ears.*

*I'm the last alive that knows it. All the rest have gone their ways
Killed, or died, or come to anchor in the old Mulatas Cays,
And I go singing, fiddling, old and starved and in despair,
And I know where all that gold is hid, if I were only there.*

*It's not the way to end it all. I'm old, and nearly blind,
And an old man's past's a strange thing, for it never leaves his mind,
And I see in dreams, awhile, the beach, the sun's disc dipping red,
And the tall ship, under topsails, swaying in past Nigger Head.*

*I'd be glad to step ashore there. Glad to take a pick and go
To the lone blazed coco-palm tree in the place no others know,
And lift the gold and silver that has mouldered there for years
By the loud surf of Los Muertos which is beating in my ears.*

Anchor's Aweigh!

*How do we know, when the port-fog holds us
Moored and helpless, a mile from the pier,
And the week-long summer smother enfolds us—
How do we know it is going to clear?
There is no break in the blindfold weather,
But, one and another, about the bay,
The unseen capstans clink together,
Getting ready to up and away.
A pennon whimpers—the breeze has found us—
A headsail jumps through the thinning haze.
The whole hull follows, till—broad around us—
The clean-swept ocean says: "Go your ways!"*





Bound for Blue Water-1

*We're bound for blue water where the great winds blow,
It's time to get the tacks aboard, time for us to go;
The crowd's at the capstan and the tune's in the shout,
"A long pull, a strong pull, and warp the hooker out."*

*The bow-wash is eddying, spreading from the bows,
Aloft and loose the topsails and some one give a rouse;
A salt Atlantic chanty shall be music to the dead,
"A long pull, a strong pull, and the yard to the masthead."*



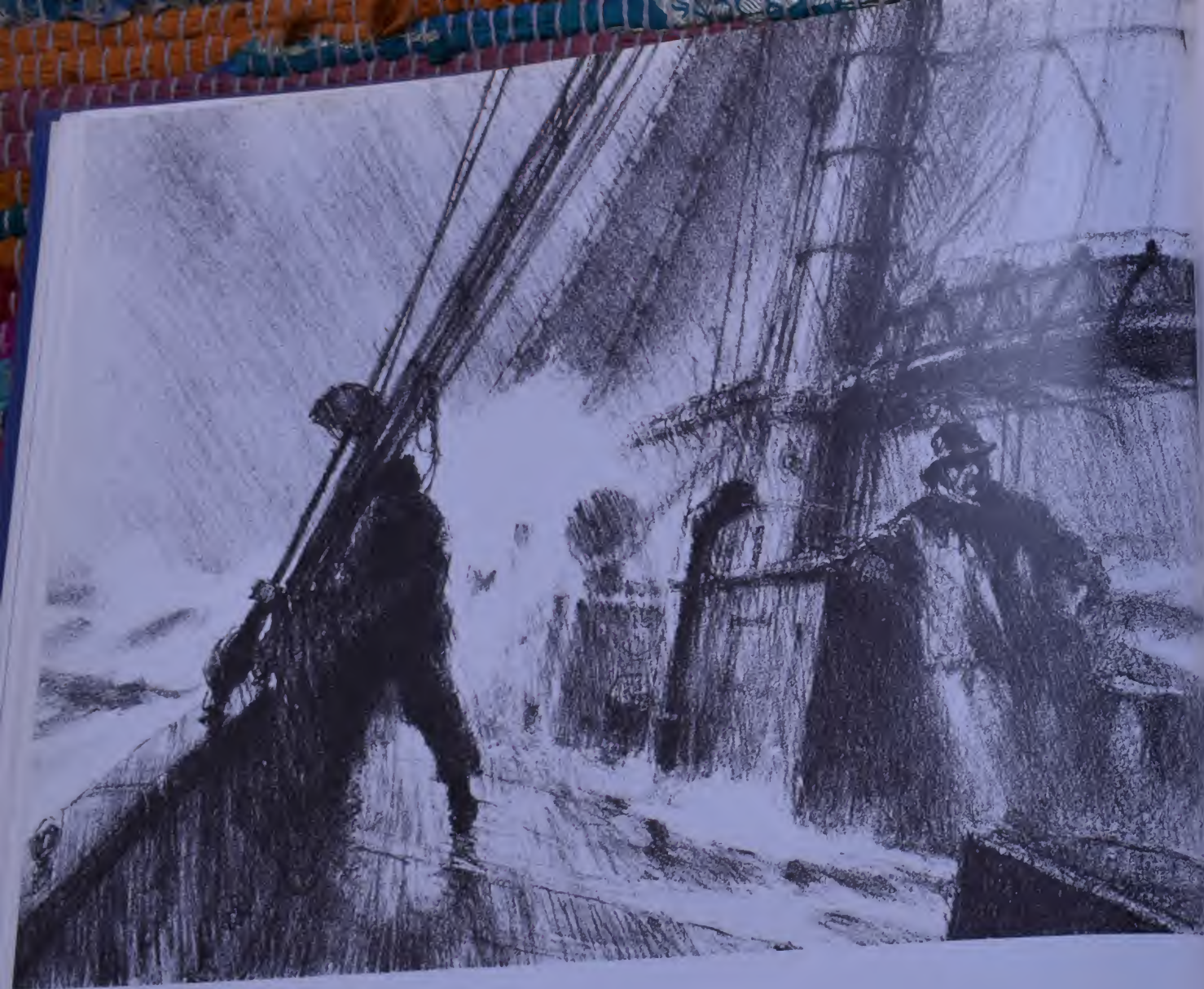


Bound for Blue Water—II

*Green and merry run the seas, the wind comes cold,
Salt and strong and pleasant, and worth a mint of gold;
And she's staggering, swooping, as she feels her feet,
"A long pull, a strong pull, and aft the main-sheet."*

*Shrilly squeal the running sheaves, the weather-gear strains,
Such a clatter of chain-sheets, the devil's in the chains;
Over us the bright stars, under us the drowned,
"A long pull, a strong pull, and we're outward bound!"*

*Yonder, round and ruddy, is the mellow old moon,
The red-funneled tug has gone, and now, sonny, soon
We'll be clear of the channel, so watch how you steer,
"Ease her when she pitches, and so-long, my dear!"*



Karlssen's Yarn

"I was in a hooker once," said Karlssen,
"And Bill, as was a seaman, died,
So we lashed him in an old tarpaulin
And tumbled him across the side;
And the fun of it was that all his gear was
Divided up among the crew
Before that blushing human error,
Our crawling little captain, knew.

"On the passage home one morning
(As certain as I pray for grace)
There was old Bill's shadder a-hauling
At the weather mizzen-topsail brace.
He was all grown green with sea-weed,
He was all lashed up and shored;
So I says to him, I says, 'Why, Billy!
What's a-bringin' of you back aboard?"

"'I'm a-weary of them there mermaids,'
Says old Bill's ghost to me;
'It ain't no place for a Christian
Below there—under sea.
For it's all blown sand and shipwrecks,
And old bones eaten bare,
And them cold fishy females
With long green weeds for hair.

"'And there ain't no dances shuffled,
And no old yarns is spun,
And there ain't no stars but starfish,
And never any moon or sun.
I heard your keel a-passing
And the running rattle of the brace.'
And he says, 'Stand by,' says William,
'For a shift towards a better place.'

"Well, he sogered about decks till sunrise,
When a rooster in the hen-coop crowed,
And as so much smoke he faded
And as so much smoke he goed;
And I've often wondered since, Jan,
How his old ghost stands to fare
Long o' them cold fishy females
With long green weeds for hair!"

A black and white sketch of a crowded, makeshift interior, possibly a prison cell or a temporary shelter. The space is filled with people, some sitting on benches or the floor, and others standing. There are various objects scattered around, including a cup on a tray in the foreground, a hanging bag, and a small table. The drawing is done in a rough, expressive style with heavy shading.

And all of this time we knew that the Southern branch of the Equatorial Current was sending us back to the W.N.W. at the rate of several miles a day!

About this time considerable activity went on forward among the old sailors in both watches. One dog watch, men from both sides of the fo'c'sle went aft and interviewed the captain.

There were quite a few of us who had never crossed the equator, and the preparations in the dog watches augured ill for those who chose to resist the just tribute demanded by Father Neptune of all green sailors who, in those days, ventured across the magic bounds.

At eight bells in the afternoon watch, as all hands were mustering in the waist, a hoarse hail from forward greeted us.

"Forward, there! Who hails us?" answered the captain, who stood out on the poop, replying to the voice from forward. "Father Neptune hails us, Captain."

"Father Neptune hail us, Captain," answered Hitchen, returning from the bow. "He asks if there are any of his children on board who would receive his blessing on their heads."

"Aye, bring him on board," ordered the skipper, a broad grin lighting his features, and the two mates reflected the feeling aft by joining in the smiles.

A noise of trudging along the deck followed, the King of the Sea, his own whiskers hidden behind a broad beard of rope yarns, a bright red harpoon in his right hand serving as a trident, and a large razor, made of hoop iron, stuck in his belt, walked aft, and draped in the folds of an old boat sail, walked aft. He was trimmings we recognized the famous Jimmy. A retinue followed, rigged out in true deep-water style, and carrying a tub between them, which was deposited on deck just aft of the mainmast. "Captain," said Neptune "I am telling you, I am telling you,"

"Captain," said Neptune, "I am told as 'ow you 'ave green 'ands on board who 'ave to be shaved."

"Yes, Your Majesty, we have some with the hayseed still in their whiskers," answered the skipper.

"Bring 'em forth!" thundered the King, unlimbering his razor and passing the trident to the safe keeping of his wife, Amphitrite, in the person of Axel, who towered two feet above the head of the King.

However, what Jimmy lacked in stature he made up in efficiency, and in the imperious glance of scorn with which he greeted eight of us who were lined up for his inspection. Old Smith grabbed me by the

Old Smith grabbed me by the neck; I was seated on the bottom of an upturned bucket at the feet of the King.

"Your name?" demanded His Majesty, and as I was about to answer a filthy swab of soapsuds and grease was thrust in my mouth and smeared over my face and the shaving began, ending by a back somersault into the tub of water behind.

"Next!" called Neptune in true barber shop style, and so, in turn, each of the green hands went through the ordeal; the least willing getting the most attention. Scouse and Joe were among the lubbers, and were accorded special rites to the vast amusement of



all hands. Australia wound up the entertainment by handing Scouse and Joe pieces of gunny sack, smeared with black paint, with which to wipe their faces.

"All right now!" called the mate, after the skipper had left the deck. "Turn to and clean up," and we were back again to the rigid discipline of the sea, relaxed for a brief hour to let King Neptune hold his sway.

Ships Log

July 15 Lat. 41.28 Lon. 61.07 NW NW WNW Moderate & Pleasant 4 PM Saw the Land WNW 25 miles, Middle fresh & Cloudy with light Rain Squalls, Latter light breezes & cloudy with light Rain Squalls No observations

July 16 Lat. 44.23 Lon. 63.29 Calm SE NE Faint Airs & Calms. Middle & Latter fresh & baffling with cloudy weather Spoke ship Harriet Erving 79 days from Boston for Valparaiso

July 17 Lat. 47.32 Lon. 64.55 NE ESE ESE Light breezes thick weather Latter moderate No observations

July 18 Lat. 48.56 Lon. 65.30 SE ESE ESE Faint airs & drizzling Rain. 4 PM in Studding Sails, 10 hours 30 minutes Sounded 65 fathoms

July 19 Lat. 49.39 Lon. 66.17 Calm N^d N^d Mostly Calm thick weather sometimes Rain

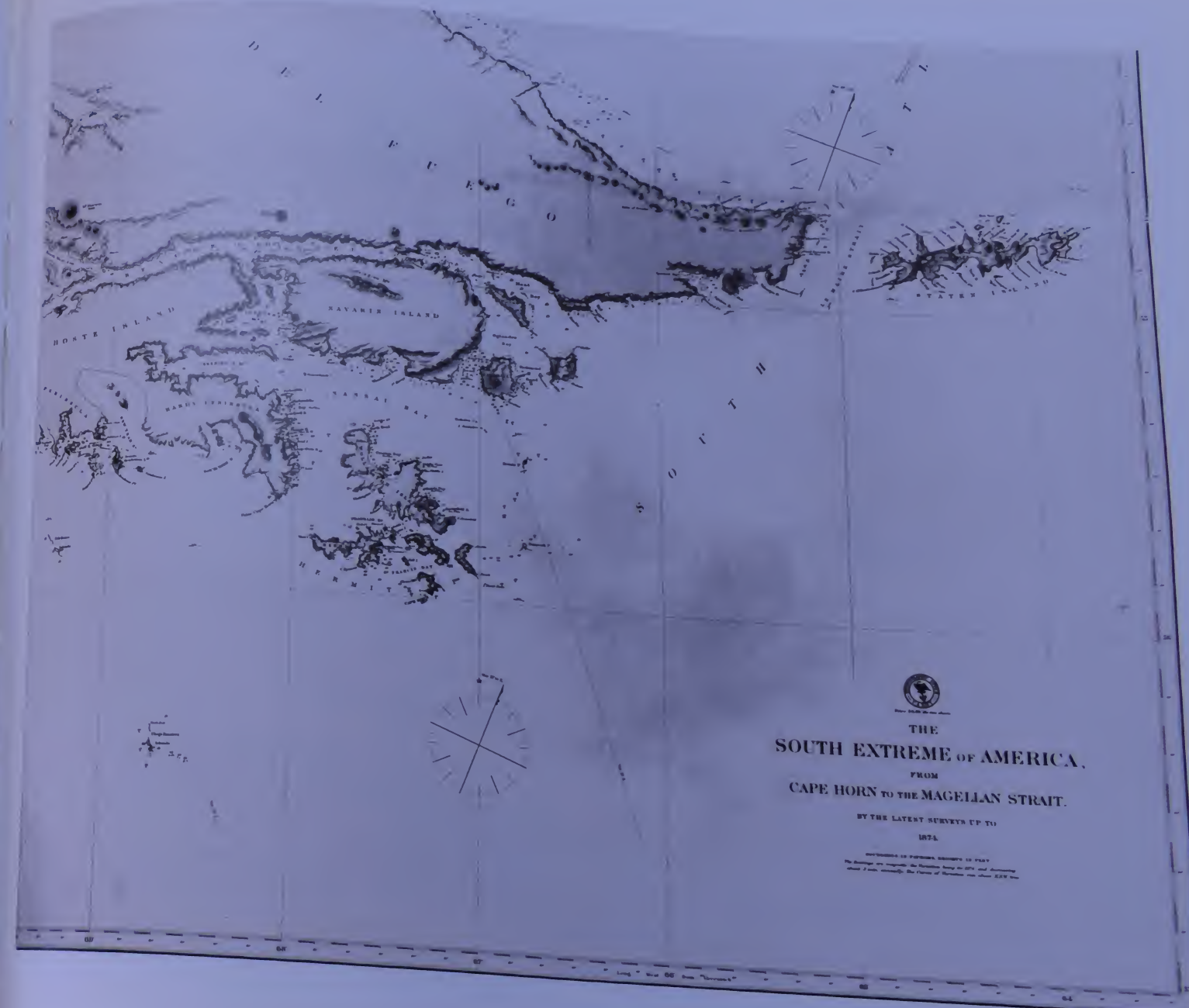
July 20 Lat. 54.25 Lon. 65.00 ENE ENE NE Light increasing breezes from Northward & veering gradually to ENE, Winds cloudy, 3 hours 30 minutes set Lauboard Studding Sails, at 10 in studding sails, weather Rainy with sleet & Squally Mid^d in

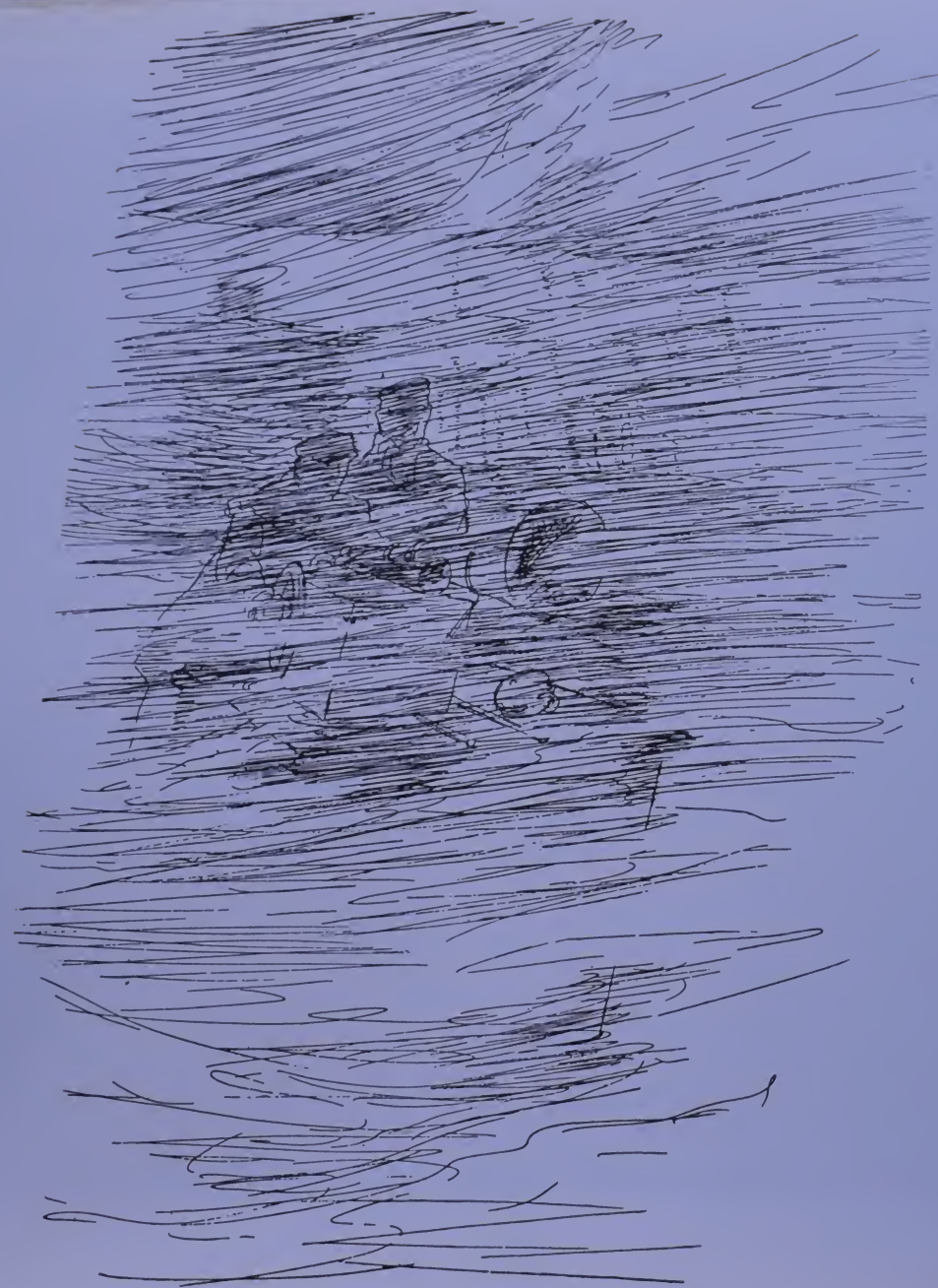
topgallant sails, at 4 AM close Reefed Topsails & furled Courses wind blowing a hard gale with thick Weather & snow, at 11 AM obliged to wave ship & haul off to Northward Cape St. Diego bearing by Estimate S 9 degrees W 16 miles, no observations

July 21 Lat. 54.02 Lon. 65.00 NE NE SE Blowing hard with snow & Rain, at 1 AM saw a large ship standing NE with loss of Foresail

July 22 Lat. 54.41 Lon. 64.50 ESE SE by S E Hard Gale with Rain & sleet shipping much water bad sea Running, at 4 PM Weather fair Saw Cape St. Diego bearing SE 15 miles, wore ship at 5 PM to NE, at 6 AM wore ship to Southward at 10 saw the land South 20 miles, at meridian St. Diego W 10 miles Weather moderate & Cloudy

July 23 Lat. 56.04 Lon. 68.16 E E E Moderate all set sail passed through St. Le Marie & Cleared the Land at 6 PM, Strong tide setting to Northward Middle Rainy, Latter fair Cape Horn N 5 miles at 8 AM, the whole coast covered with snow—wild Ducks numerous, . . .





Cape Horn Fog

All through the windless night the clipper rolled
In a great swell with oily gradual heaves
Which rolled her down until her time-bells tolled,
Clang, and the weltering water moaned like bees.
The thundering rattle of slatting shook the sheaves,
Startles of water made the swing ports gush,
The sea was moaning and sighing and saying "Hush!"

It was all black and starless. Peering down
Into the water, trying to pierce the gloom,
One saw a dim, smooth, oily glitter of brown
Heaving and dying away and leaving room
For yet another. Like the march of doom
Came those great powers of marching silences;
Then fog came down, dead-cold, and hid the seas.

They set the Dauber to the foghorn. There
He stood upon the poop, making to sound
Out of the pump the sailor's nasal blare,
Listening lest ice should make the note resound.
She bayed there like a solitary hound
Lost in a covert; all the watch she bayed.
The fog, come closelier down, no answer made.

Denser it grew, until the ship was lost.
The elemental hid her; she was merged
In mufflings of dark death, like a man's ghost,
New to the change of death, yet thither urged.
Then from the hidden waters something surged—
Mournful, despairing, great, greater than speech,
A noise like one slow wave on a still beach.

Mournful, and then again mournful, and still
Out of the night that mighty voice arose;
The Dauber at his foghorn felt the thrill.
Who rode that desolate sea? What forms were those?
Mournful, from things defeated, in the throes
Of memory of some conquered hunting-ground,
Out of the night of death arose the sound.

"Whales!" said the Mate. They stayed there all night long
Answering the horn. Out of the night they spoke,
Defeated creatures who had suffered wrong,
But were still noble underneath the stroke.
They filled the darkness when the Dauber woke;
The men came peering to the rail to hear,
And the sea sighed, and the fog rose up sheer.

A wall of nothing at the world's last edge,
Where no life came except defeated life.
The Dauber felt shut in within a hedge,
Behind which form was hidden and thought was rife,
And that a blinding flash, a thrust, a knife
Would sweep the hedge away and make all plain,
Brilliant beyond all words, blinding the brain.

So the night passed, but then no morning broke—
Only a something showed that night was dead.
A sea-bird, cackling like a devil, spoke,
And the fog drew away and hung like lead.
Like mighty cliffs it shaped, sullen and red;
Like glowering gods at watch it did appear,
And sometimes drew away, and then drew near.

Like islands, and like chasms, and like hell,
But always mighty and red, gloomy and ruddy.
Shutting the visible sea in like a well;
Slow heaving in vast ripples, blank and muddy,
Where the sun should have risen it streaked bloody.
The day was still-born; all the sea-fowl scattering
Splashed the still water, mewing, hovering, clattering.

Polar Snow

*Then Polar snow came down little and light,
Till all the sky was hidden by the small,
Most multitudinous drift of dirty white
Tumbling and wavering down and covering all—
Covering the sky, the sea, the clipper tall,
Furring the ropes with white, casing the mast,
Coming on no known air, but blowing past.*

*And all the air seemed full of gradual moan,
As though in those cloud-chasms the horns were blowing
The mort for gods cast out and overthrown,
Or for the eyeless sun plucked out and going,
Slow the low gradual moan came in the snowing;
The Dauber felt the prelude had begun,
The snowstorm fluttered by; he saw the sun*

*Show and pass by, gleam from one towering prison
Into another, vaster and more grim,
Which in dull crags of darkness had arisen
To muffle-to a final door on him,
The gods upon the dull crags lowered dim,
The pigeons chattered, quarrelling in the track,
In the south-west the dimness dulled to black.*





All Hands on Deck!

*Then came the cry of "Call all hands on deck!"
The Dauber knew its meaning; it was come;
Cape Horn, that tramples beauty into wreck,
And crumples steel and smites the strong man dumb.
Down clattered flying kites and staysails; some
Sang out in quick, high calls: the fair-leads skirled,
And from the south-west came the end of the world.*

*"Caught in her ball-dress," said the Bosun, hauling;
"Lee-ay, lee-ay!" quick, high, come the men's call;
It was all wallop of sails and startled calling,
"Let fly!" "Let go!" "Clew up!" and "Let go all!"
"Now up and make them fast!" "Here, give us a haul!"
"Now up and stow them! Quick! By God! we're done!"
The blackness crunched all memory of the sun.*





Up, Damn You!

"Up!" said the Mate, "Mizen top-gallants. Hurry!"
 The Dauber ran, the others ran, the sails
 Slatted and shook; out of the black a flurry
 Whirled in fine lines, tattering the edge to trails.
 Painting and art and England were old tales
 Told in some other life to that pale man,
 Who struggled with white fear and gulped and ran.

He struck a ringbolt in his haste and fell—
 Rose, sick with pain, half-lamed in his left knee;
 He reached the shrouds where clambering men pell-mell
 Hustled each other up and cursed him; he
 Hurried aloft with them; then from the sea
 Came a cold, sudden breath that made the hair
 Stiff on the neck, as though Death whispered there.

A man below him punched him in the side.
 "Get up, you Dauber, or let me get past."
 He saw the belly of the skysail skied.
 Gulped, and clutched tight, and tried to go more fast.
 Sometimes he missed his ratline and was grassed.
 Scraped his shin raw against the rigid line
 The clamberers reached the futtock-shrouds' incline.

Cursing they came; one, kicking out behind.
 Kicked Dauber in the mouth, and one below
 Punched at his calves; the futtock-shrouds inclined
 It was a perilous path for one to go.
 "Up, Dauber, up!" A curse followed a blow.
 He reached the top and gasped, then on, then on.
 And one voice yelled "Let go!" and one "All gone!"

Fierce clamberers, some in oilskins, some in rags,
 Hustling and hurrying up, up the steep stairs.
 Before the windless sails were blown to flags,
 And whirled like dirty birds athwart great airs,
 Ten men in all, to get this mast of theirs
 Snugged to the gale in time. "Up! Damn you, run!"
 The mizen topmast head was safely won.



The

The ship was a schooner, a two-masted sailing vessel, and it was a sight to behold. The sails were white, and the ship was dark, a stark contrast against the blue sea and sky. The ship was moving slowly, and the water around it was calm. The ship was a sight to behold, and it was a sight to remember.

Blown to Rags

How long the gale had blown he could not tell,
Only the world had changed, his life had died.
A moment now was everlasting hell.
Nature an onslaught from the weather side.
A withering rush of death, a frost that cried.
Shrieked, till he withered at the heart, a hail
Plastered his oilskins with an icy mail.

"Cut!" yelled his mate. He looked—the sail was gone,
Blown into rags in the first furious squall.
The tatters drummed the devil's tattoo. On
The buckling yard a block thumped like a mall.
The ship lay—the sea smote her, the wind's bacl
Came, "loo, loo, loo!" The devil cried his hounds
On to the poor spent stag strayed in his bounds.

"Cut! Ease her!" yelled his mate; the Dauber heard.
His mate wormed up the tilted yard and slashed.
A rag of canvas skimmed like a darting bird.
The snow whirled, the ship bowed to it, the gear lashed.
The sea-tops were cut off and flung down smashed;
Tatters of shouts were flung, the rags of yells—
And clang, clang, clang, below beat the two bells.

"O God!" the Dauber moaned. A roaring rang,
Blasting the royals like a cannonade;
The backstays parted with a crackling clang,
The upper spars were snapped like twigs decayed—
Snapped at their heels, their jagged splinters splayed,
Like white and ghastly hairs erect with fear.
The Mate yelled, "Gone, by God, and pitched them clear!"

"Up!" yelled the Bosun; "up and clear the wreck!"
The Dauber followed where he led; below
He caught one giddy glimpsing of the deck
Filled with white water, as though heaped with snow.
He saw the streamers of the rigging blow
Straight out like pennons from the splintered mast,
Then, all sense dimmed, all was an icy blast

Roaring from nether hell and filled with ice,
Roaring and crashing on the jerking stage,
An utter bridle given to utter vice,
Limitless power mad with endless rage
Withering the soul; a minute seemed an age.
He clutched and hacked at ropes, at rags of sail
Thinking that comfort was a fairy-tale

Told long ago—long, long ago—long since
Heard of in other lives—imagined, dreamed—
There where the basest beggar was a prince
To him in torment where the tempest screamed,
Comfort and warmth and ease no longer seemed
Things that a man could know; soul, body, brain,
Knew nothing but the wind, the cold, the pain.





Growl You May, But Go You Must

"Leave that!" the Bosun shouted; "Crojack save!"
The splitting crojack, not yet gone to rags,
Thundered below, beating till something gave,
Bellying between its buntlines into bags.
Some birds were blown past, shrieking: dark, like shags.
Their backs seemed, looking down, "Leu, leu!" they cried.
The ship lay, the seas thumped her; she had died.

They reached the crojack yard, which buckled, buckled
Like a thin whalebone to the topsail's strain.
They laid upon the yard and heaved and knuckled,
Pounding the sail, which jangled and leapt again.
It was quite hard with ice, its rope like chain,
Its strength like seven devils; it shook the mast.
They cursed and toiled and froze: a long time passed.

Two hours passed, then a dim lightening came,
Those frozen ones upon the yard could see
The mainsail and the foresail still the same,
Still battling with the hands and blowing free,
Rags tattered where the staysails used to be.
The lower topsails stood; the ship's lee deck
Seethed with four feet of water filled with wreck.

An hour more went by, the Dauber lost
All sense of hands and feet, all sense of all
But of a wind that cut him to the ghost,
And of a frozen fold he had to haul.
Of heavens that fell and never ceased to fall,
And ran in smoky snatches along the sea,
Leaping from crest to wave-crest, yelling. He

Lost sense of time; no bells went, but he felt
Ages go over him. At last, at last
They frapped the cringled crojack's icy pelt;
In frozen bulge and bunt they made it fast.
Then, scarcely live, they laid in to the mast.
The Captain's speaking trumpet gave a blare,
"Make fast the topsail, Mister, while you're there."

Some seamen cursed, but up they had to go —
Up to the topsail yard to spend an hour
Stowing a topsail in a blinding snow,
Which made the strongest man among them cower.
More men came up, the fresh hands gave them power.
They stowed the sail; then with a rattle of chain
One half the crojack burst its bonds again.



Coiling Down

The water freed;
Each clanging freeing-port became a spout.
The men cleared up the decks as there was need.
The Dauber's head was cut, he felt it bleed
Into his oilskins as he clutched and coiled.
Water and sky were devil's brews which boiled.

Boiled, shrieked, and glowered; but the ship was saved.
Snugged safely down, though fourteen sails were split.
Out of the dark a fiercer fury raved.
The grey-backs died and mounted, each crest lit
With a white toppling gleam that hissed from it
And slid, or leaped, or ran with whirls of cloud.
Mad with inhuman life that shrieked aloud.

The watch was called; Dauber might go below.
"Splice the main brace!" the Mate called. All laid aft
To get a gulp of momentary glow
As some reward for having saved the craft.
The steward ladled mugs, from which each quaff'd
Whisky, with water, sugar, and lime-juice, hot,
A quarter of a pint each made the tot.

Beside the lamp-room door the steward stood
Ladling it out, and each man came in turn,
Tipped his sou'-wester, drank it, grunted "Good!"
And shambl'd forward, letting it slowly burn. . . .



Cape Horn Rescue—II

Taking off a distressed crew of twenty-five men could not be done casually.

Fegan was shrewd. To jockey into position to wind'ard of the *Minotaur*, drift down as near as safety permitted, and so lessen the wet road to be taken by the boat, was his aim. He took in all square sail—going aloft to do that warmed our frozen bodies—and kept her under lower stay-sails, since speed or comfort were no longer main desiderata.

There was no melodramatic appeal for volunteers. Mr. Perkins simply turned about from overseeing the readying of the lee lifeboat and barked:

"Which of you's coming, then? You, Jeffreys?" Jeffreys began to strip off his oilskins and kick off his seaboots. That was answer enough. He didn't intend to be hampered by weighty clothing if he ended up in the sea. Chamberlain and Elliott followed his example; so did Rhys and then—not so briskly—Macauley.

"I want five men," said the mate, "and a boy for the bow." The

boy was to be ready to leap up a rope and effect communication with the floundering *Minotaur* in case her own people were too frozen to aid themselves. Someone nimble and agile, fairly muscular. I was all three.

"You like to try it, Shaw?" snarled the mate, as if sentencing me to death, not asking my collaboration in a forlorn hope.

When Fegan was satisfied that the ship was in position he threw her into the wind, her fore-and-aft canvas slatted frantically as all way was checked.

"Watch your chance, mister!" he trumpeted. "Good luck!"

"Ay, ay, sir," grunted Perkins. "Take the weight on your capstans!" Sayle was in charge of the heaving out; Fegan took control of the lowering. The capstans clanked, as the boat lifted its keel from the chocks the ship shuddered, leaned viciously to wind'ard, and then took in half the Cape Horn sea. It seemed no less. The men at the capstans were hurled into the scuppers. The boat settled back into the chocks. At the next attempt, the boat was lifted and swung out. Then it became a furious fight to save her from being stove against the side. We who had jumped in had all our work to keep her fended off, with stretcher, boat-hook, oar-loom. The lifeboat was lifted high above the rail, then fell into roaring vortices. Only most Herculean efforts saved it from being smashed small. But it was clear.



Cape Horn Rescue—III

As soon as we emerged from the ship's shelter the weight of wind sent us along, and Mr. Perkins ordered a reefed sail to be set! That was a feat of no common cleverness. But this ex-North Sea cabin-boy could have sailed a scow round the world, I think. We got up the diminished sail, and the boat plunged ahead, tearing the waves to foam and froth. Occasionally a high wave towered as if about to swamp us, and had a weak man been at the steering oar—Perkins disclaimed the rudder, which the seas might easily unhook from its pintles—we must have broached to and been overwhelmed. But we ran away from each comber as it curled and crashed, our wake was a maelstrom; a high wave towered beside each bow

Actually, the time taken in crossing from ship to ship was too short to allow any noticeable emotions to grow. I bailed furiously when ordered to do so. Exposed there in the boat the cold was indescribable—ice clogged my jersey, my bootless feet were like frozen marble. We wore no lifebelts.

Whilst we were crossing that half-mile or so of ugly water—soaring high to see the wreck ahead, swooping deeply until it felt as if we could never lift again, with spindrift slashing everywhere, and the boat itself appearing to spin in giddy circles—Captain Fegan—crafty seaman!—got the *Dovenby* under way again and, as soon as we saw we were clear of such scant shelter as the low hull

afforded, worked the barque down to leeward of the *Minotaur*. This in itself, with a lashed ship, was no trifling feat of seaman-ship, especially considering how shorthanded he was with almost half his crew away in the lifeboat. But he knew that for the boat to attempt to return against wind and sea was an impossibility; whereas, down to leeward of the wreck, we might stand a fighting chance. So, using his skill and definite courage, he took the fighting fabric across the wreck's stern, and wore her round on her other side. It meant loosening canvas, setting it, and furling it again—everything there being ice-bound; but he did it. In all the bright lexicon of windjamming there was no such word as "fail"!

Meantime, we threshed on, until Mr. Perkins deemed it well to douse the sail and rely on oars. The boat almost capsized at that juncture.

We got the boat within close hail of the hard-set *Minotaur*. Mr. Perkins was railing at the crew now they were pulling hard. He used language that might have set the sodden timbers on fire. Had he employed similar words on the *Dovenby's* decks he would probably have been brained with a belaying-pin; but no one cared; indeed, his savage ferocity of word and act was afterwards praised by us as showing the caliber of hard-case man he was!

I lent my weight to the bow oar. It seemed trivial help. Over my shoulder I saw the wreck at close quarters; she looked squalid and very evident. Even when lifted by the seas she was sodden, and when she sank back it appeared as if she would never climb to open air again. So clean-swept was she that every man of her crew had taken refuge in the rigging; the captain was lowermost. Her deck-houses were torn open—we used to admire them, for they were built of teakwood and rather ornately carved. Her poop-break had once been a picture of bright wood and brass. But a loose spar had carried along the swilling decks and its heel had served as a battering-ram to hammer in that trickery; the cabin windows were empty holes out of which water sluiced as she dived. Desolation made manifest is the impression I still retain of her.

To approach her from the weather side must have been fatal—any wave might have swung the boat against the hull and bilged it irretrievably. Mr. Perkins was not a tyro—he steered for us to pass under the squattering stern. To leeward was a considerable tangle of wreckage. Although the masts were cut away the action of the sea had kept them close alongside; a rope was fouled to serve as painter—a wire rope that could not be cut. The spars pounded the hull. It was not easy to discover a passage in the curdled debris through which the boat could approach with safety to herself, but sea-wise Perkins discovered it. I have a vague impression of fending off loose wreckage with a boathook, then of clawing a hold into the chains. I remember the *Minotaur's* captain yelling: "Hurry—hurry—she's all but gone!"



Cape Horn Rescue—IV

Jeffreys was sent to join me in the bow—to fend off as I received our salvage, which came down, man by man, the first one grasping our painter and taking a hitch with it. Just as he slithered down the rope—he was frozen so that he could hardly move—the painter tore apart. He went overside, I grabbed him, got an arm, hooked his hand over our gunwale, then fetched him in like a sack of coals. His face was piteously blue, but his stiff lips said: "Thanks, mate!" He was pushed underfoot, we took in the next one.

It was a wild, senseless scrabble, actually. Details do not stand out clearly; everything was so breathless and so intensely cold and uncomfortable. I felt as if my arms were dragged from their sockets a score of times. I was hit, kicked in the face by the boots of men coming down the line that was thrown to replace our broken painter. I remember reaching over to grab one man who'd jumped at the wrong moment and missed the mark—the suction alongside was dragging him under, I had a hold of his pants-seat and a wrinkle of his shirt, and I swore I'd hang on till hell froze over! Jeffreys spared a hand just as I was being dragged over to join him,

his bull-like strength swung him in, the lurch of the boat aiding human effort, and the man's fingernails raked down my face from temple to chin. I didn't feel the pain until much later, when I thawed out!

"Look alive!" Perkins was braying ceaselessly, as he worked his oar like a scull to keep the bow close in, since it was now not possible to use the pulling oars, because of the loose wreckage on which they might break—and we had no spares.

One of the *Minotaur's* men lost his hold of the rope as he slithered down and he fell between boat and ship's side. A wave pyramided over him, and there was a fragment of timber in its foamy crest, it hurled itself at the submerged man and sank him—I saw a thin tinge of red appear in the curdled water, nothing more.

But when another missed the boat—a slim boy—and fell into the sea, to reappear on the other side, having passed clean under the keel—Rhys, elderly, rheumatic as he was, owner of a weak heart, jumped over the side after him and grasped him, hanging to the gunwale with one tattooed hand and the boy with the other, until Chamberlain and Macauley got their hands under his armpits and brought him back.

When 14 people had come thus, Mr. Perkins funneled his hands to hail the *Minotaur's* captain.

"Full load—we'll be back!" he yelled undramatically.



Cape Horn Rescue—v

The captain waved his hand stiffly, but he gave us a one-man cheer. So we cast off, backed out—experiencing much the same harassment as when first leaving the *Dovenby's* side—and settled for the return voyage. It was impossible to step the mast or set even a rag of sail; but such of the salvaged as could move insisted on double-banking the oars, and we slugged along toward our ship—jockeying wildly in her new position.

Once we reached the *Dovenby's* stern, drawing in very closely, Captain Fegan hove a weighted heaving-line which fell across the boat and, when hauled in, we found a stout four-inch rope made fast to it. This simplified matters a good deal, the inboard bight of the rope was led to a capstan, and with the crew heaving staunchly we were dragged alongside. Thus all our boat's crew were free to fend off and hold on when we actually came alongside. Perkins yelled that we'd have to make a return trip.

Fegan replied—through a speaking-trumpet, the first time I'd ever known him to use one—that the weather was worsening. Meanwhile, the crew aboard the ship had pitched down bowlines and a jumping-ladder, and we were already passing up the cast-aways. It was quite as formidable a task as salvaging them—even more so, in some respects. When the ropes were thrown down they spanked us cruelly, so the entire proceeding was a blasphemous affair enough. One of our rescued broke an arm, for the boat

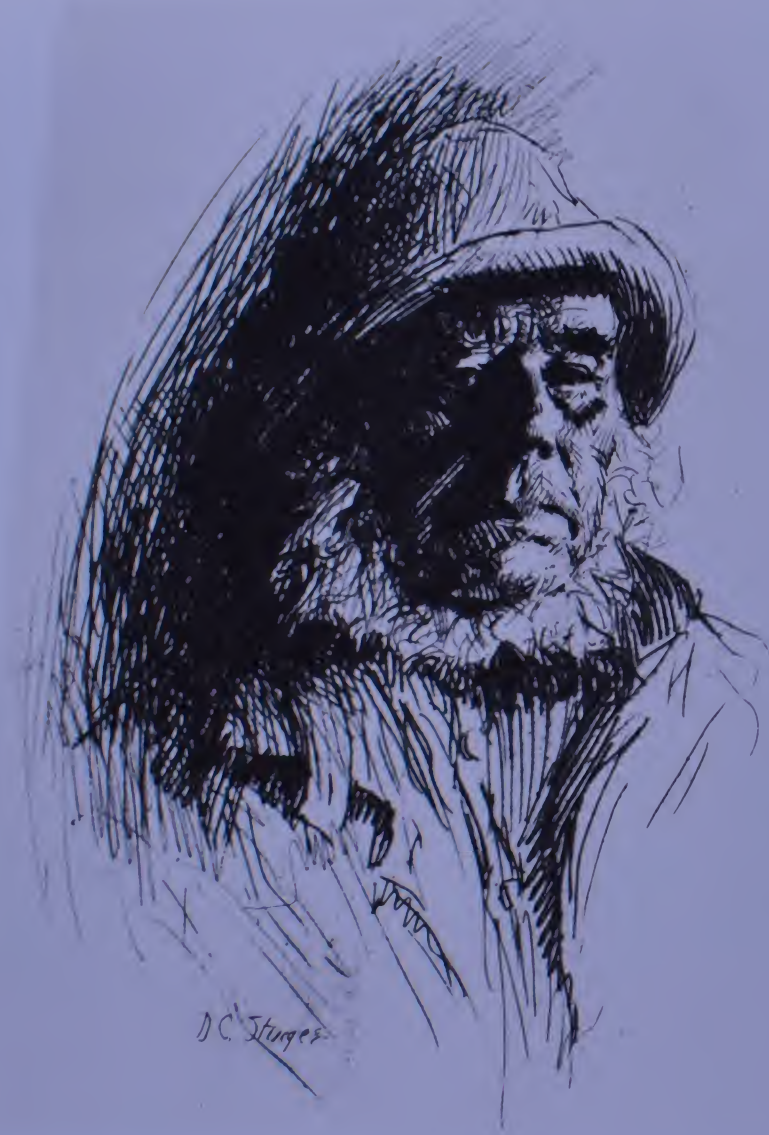
surged away just as those above took the weight on a rope; the unfortunate man swung against the *Dovenby's* plates and through the din we heard the bone crack—it was like a tree-branch going. Later on Captain Fegan and the *Minotaur's* captain amputated that broken arm.

With our boat emptied of its first load, Perkins—suddenly human, for all the time of the double crossing he'd been a very devil of spluttering spite and foul-mouthedness—sang out: "Anyone want a relief? We're trying again!" The boat-crew were blown, weary, they'd seen for themselves what boatwork in that kind of sea really was, but every man refused to allow himself to be replaced.

"All right—you've done not so badly!" said Perkins, and that was the only word of commendation I ever heard from him. Next day he was as rigorous in his attitude as ever—cursing us for a lot of useless scrimshankers! The sea doesn't believe in handing out fragrant bouquets!

But Fegan passed down a bottle of diluted rum, and we all took a heartening swig, feeling we'd earned it. Then we bailed out the boat and it was hooked on to the davit-falls; these were led to the capstans and we were hove clear of the water, for the *Dovenby* had again to be jockeyed into position to wind'ard of the squatting *Minotaur*.





Song for All Seas, All Ships

Today a rude brief recitative,
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship signal,
Of unnamed heroes in the ships—of waves spreading and
 spreading far as the eye can reach,
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations
Fifful, like a surge

Of sea-captains young or old, and the mates, and of all intrepid sailors,
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never
 surprise or death dismay,
Pick'd sparingly without noise by thee old ocean, chosen by thee,
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

(Ever the heroes on water or on land, by ones or twos appearing,
Ever the stock preserv'd and never lost, though rare enough
 for seed preserv'd).

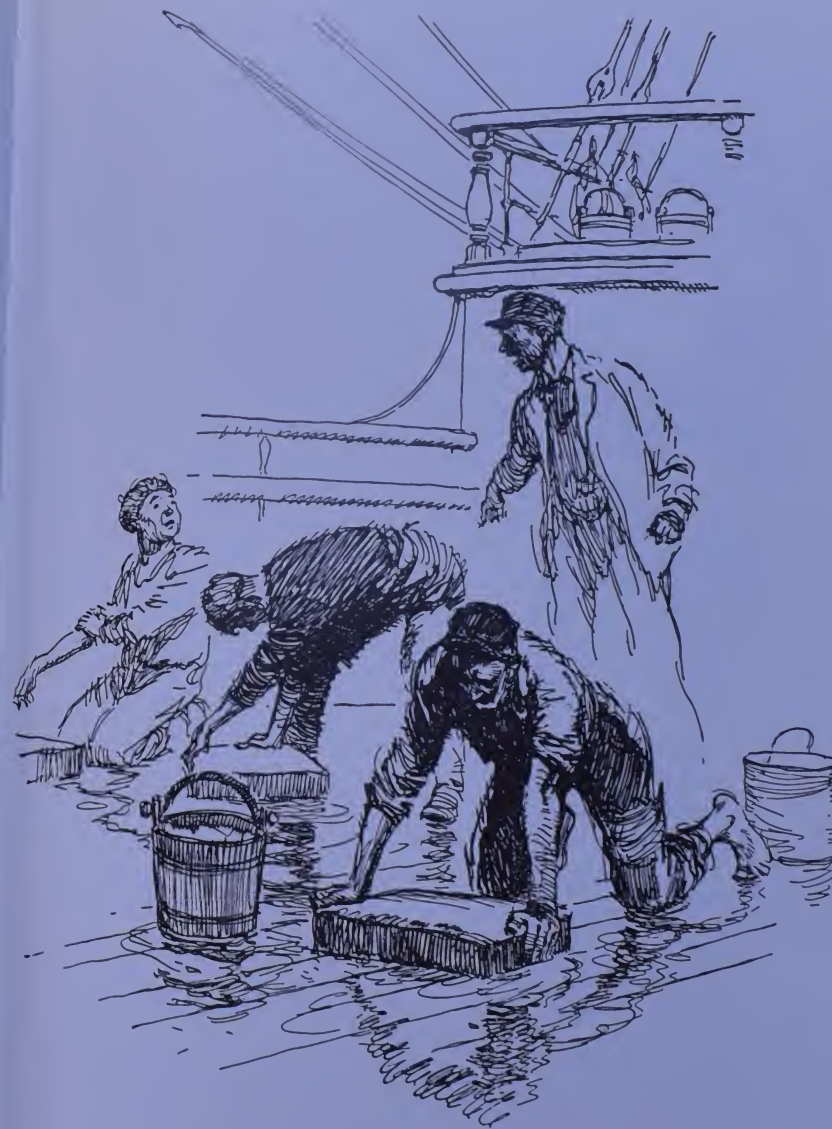


Sails

*Hails from Wales,
Does Sails.*

*For any old thing you like to choose
From a new main course to a pair of shoes,
Or a bolt o' canvas to roll your bones
In when you voyage to Davy Jones,
Or thundering cuffers as ever you heard,
Sails is the man, you take my word!*

*He sits on the hatch, when it's sunny and calm,
With his specs on his nose, and his needle and palm,
Stitches and patches and yarns away
Of the ships that he knew in a bygone day,
The single topsails that once he made
For the Fiery Cross in the China trade,
Ringtails, watersails, Lord knows what
Old kites whose fashion near forgot.
And many a wonderful tale he tells
Of pirate junks off the Paracels,
And the great sea serpent he once saw rolled
Asleep on the water, fold on fold,
And a craft they spoke, of an unknown rig,
Beamy and bluff as a Geordie brig,
Tearing along in the teeth of the gale,
South o' the Cape, under all plain sail,
With a bloke that stood at the wheel and steered
In old-style togs, with a long white beard,
And the eyes of him, look you, burning bright,
Like coals of fire or a ship's portlight:
And "Look you, sonnies," says Sails, "I reckon
That hooker's skipper wass—Vanderdecken!"*



Rolling Stone

*I ain't a-goin' to sign in this ship, sonny,
Nor sail in 'er no more:
I'm goin' to mosey round an' spend my money
An' 'ave my run ashore,
An' then look for a ship that's bound somewheres
as I've never been afore.*

*It ain't as I've got anythink agin 'er
Of any sort or kind,
It ain't as I 'aven't 'ad as good times in 'er
As any I can mind;
It ain't as I 'aven't 'ad as good shipmates
as a man 'ud wish to find.*

*It's just that I'm fed up with things an' places,
An' all the blessed show,
An' what I want's a fresh lot o' chaps' faces
An' a ship as I don't know,
An' different grub an' a strange berth to lie in
an' somewheres else to go.*

*I've always been that way since I was a nipper
An' 'ooked it off to sea,
Or I daresay by now I'd 'a' been a skipper,
Or mate at least maybe,
But if I could I wouldn't do no different
(which I couldn't, bein' me!)*

*An' I ain't a-goin' to sign again, sonny,
In this old ship no more:
I'm goin' to mosey round an' spend my money
And 'ave my run ashore,
An' then I'll look for a ship that's goin' somewheres
as I 'aven't been afore. . . .*



The Ship's Cook

Like most South Seamen, the *Julia*'s "caboose" or cook-house was planted on the larboard side of the fore-castle. Under such a press of canvas, and with the heavy sea running, the harpie, diving her bows under, now and then shipped green glassy waves, which, breaking over the head-rails, fairly deluged that part of the ship, and washed clean aft. The caboose-house—thought to be fairly lashed down to its place—served as a sort of breakwater to the inundation.

About these times, Baltimore always wore what he called his "gale-suit," among other things comprising a Sou'-wester and a huge pair of well-anointed sea-boots, reaching almost to his knees. Thus equipped for a ducking or a drowning, as the case might be, our culinary high-priest drew to the slides of his temple, and performed his sooty rites in secret.

So afraid was the old man of being washed overboard that he actually fastened one end of a small line to his waistbands, and coiling the rest about him, made use of it as occasion required. When engaged outside, he unwound the cord, and secured one end to a ring-bolt in the deck; so that if a chance sea washed him off his feet, it could do nothing more.

One evening just as he was getting supper, the *Julia* reared up on her stern like a vicious colt, and when she settled again forward, fairly dished a tremendous sea. Nothing could withstand it. One side of the rotten head-bulwarks came in with a crash, it smote the caboose, tore it from its moorings, and after boxing it about, dashed it against the windlass, where it stranded. The water then poured along the deck like a flood rolling over and over, pots, pans, and kettles, and even old Baltimore himself, who went breaching along like a porpoise.

Striking the taffrail, the wave subsided, and washing from side to side, left the drowning cook high and dry on the after-hatch: his extinguished pipe still between his teeth, and almost bitten in two.

The few men on deck having sprung into the main-rigging, sailor-like, did nothing but roar at his calamity.

The Lookout

October 13th—"There she blows!" was sung out from the mast-head.

"Where away?" demanded the captain.

"Three points off the lee bow, sir."

"Raise up your wheel. Steady!"

"Steady, sir."

"Mast-head ahoy! Do you see that whale now?"

"Ay, ay, sir! A school of sperm whales! There she blows! There she breaches!"

"Sing out! Sing out every time!"

"Ay, ay, sir! There she blows! There—there—*thar*' she blows—bowes—bo-o-o-s!"

"How far off!"

"Two miles and a half!"

"Thunder and lightning! so near! Call all hands!"





Boats Away!

"Clew up the fore-^tgallant-sail—there! belay! Hard down your wheel! Haul aback the main yard! Get your tubs in your boats. Bear a hand! Clear your falls! Stand by all to lower! All ready?"

"All ready, sir!"

"Lower away!"

Down went the boats with a splash. Each boat's crew sprang over the rail, and in an instant the larboard, starboard, and waist boats were manned. There was great rivalry in getting the start. The waist-boat got off in pretty good time; and away went all three, dashing the water high over their bows.

"Line your oars, boys, and pull ahead—(a lapse of two or three minutes)—pull ahead, I tell you, why don't ye—Oh, how they lay, heads and points, look at 'em—pull ahead, I tell ye—long and strong, head boat, I say—(an interval of about 60 seconds)—every

man do his best—lay back, I tell ye (fiercely)—why don't ye spring—don't let that boat pass ye (despondingly)—spring, I tell ye (authoritatively) there, there they be, round and round with 'em, for God's sake, pull ahead (entreatingly)—(lapse of a few seconds)—everything—everything I've got in my chest I'll give ye, do spring boys, let's go on first. Now then, back to the thwarts, give her the touch; I feel ye (encouragingly)—five seas off, but five seas off, spring!—3-oar side best; pull all, pull every son of you (boisterously)—I'll give you all my tobacco, everything I've got—look at her, O, what a hump, and slow as night—don't you look round (passionately)—I tell you she don't blow, she only whiffs it out—at the end of your thwarts, pull, and we'll be on this rising—she's an 80-barrel whale; there she mills; by jingo she's heading to leeward; a large fellow separate from the school (shoal)—why the herry don't you pull—now do boys, do your best, won't you (soothingly)—I tell you we are jam on to her! One minute more!"

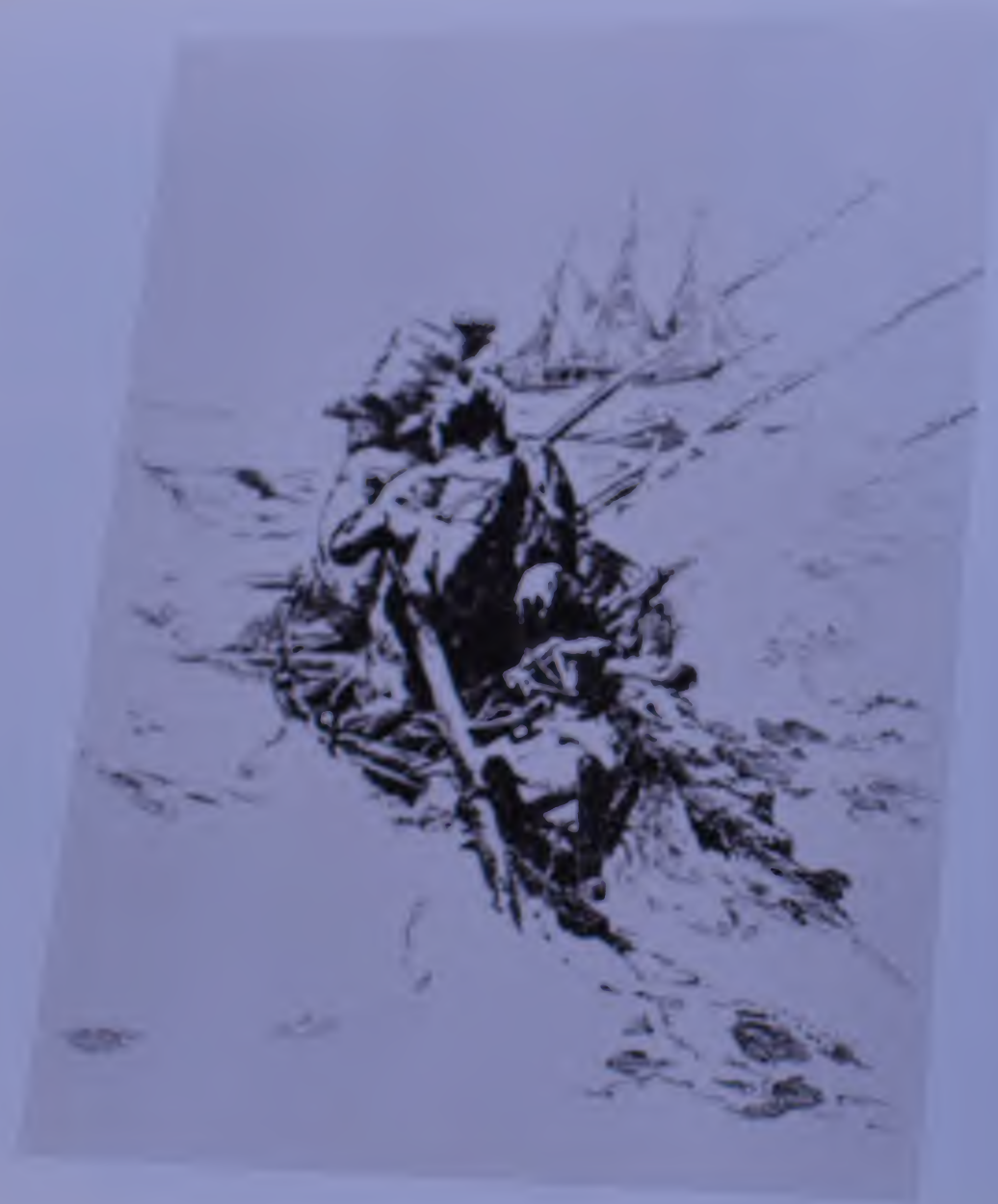




Harpooner

"Half a minute!—O, boys, if you want to see your sweethearts, if you want to see Nantucket (with emotion), pull ahead—spring, b—t ye, that whale will shorten our voyage six months—I tell you we gain her fast—now's the time—mills still-heading to leeward—slap on to her in a moment—harpooner stand by—all my tobacco—all my clothes—everything that I possess—pull—O, what a whale (softly)—I've hove my soul out—harpooner—harpooner—harpooner . . . —one minute more, lay back; spring half a minute more; all my tobacco, a double share of grog—we are in her wake—(whispers) make no noise with your oars—STAND UP HARPOONER—pull the rest—GIVE IT HER SOLID!
 . . . Stern, stern I tell ye (loudly)—stern all, stern like the devil—stern, and get clear of the whale—"





Nantucket Sleigh Ride

The same moment, something went bad and kissing along every one of their veins. It was the magical line. By instant action, Stubb had twilly caught two additional turns with it round the log-heel, whence, by reason of its increased rapid twirling, a heavier blue smoke now poured up and mingled with the steady fumes from his pipe.

"Was the line wet the line?" cried Stubb to the tall seaman (later named by the folk who, supplanting all his hat, dubbed the snowdrift into it. Many turns were taken, so that the line began building its place. The boat now flew through the boiling water like a duck all her. Stubb and Tashy had changed places—Tashy for Stubb—and suggesting business talk in that jerking communication.

From the cleaving line attending the entire length of the upper part of the boat, and from its nose being more tight than a harpoon, you would have thought the craft had two bows—one steering the water, the other the air—as the boat charged on through both opposing elements at once.

A continual ransack played at the bow, a ceaseless whirling eddy in her wake and, at the slightest motion from within, even but of a little finger, the vibrating, tracking craft curled over her quazmoic garwale into the sea. Thus they pitched, each man with might and main clinging to his seat, to prevent being tossed to the foam; and the tall form of Tashy at the steering was crouching almost double in order to bring down his centre of gravity. Whole Atlantic and Pacific oceanic passed as they shot on their way, till at length the whale somewhat slackened his flight.

"Haul in—haul in!" cried Stubb to the townsman, and, facing round towards the whale, all hands began pulling the boat up to him, while yet the boat was being towed on.

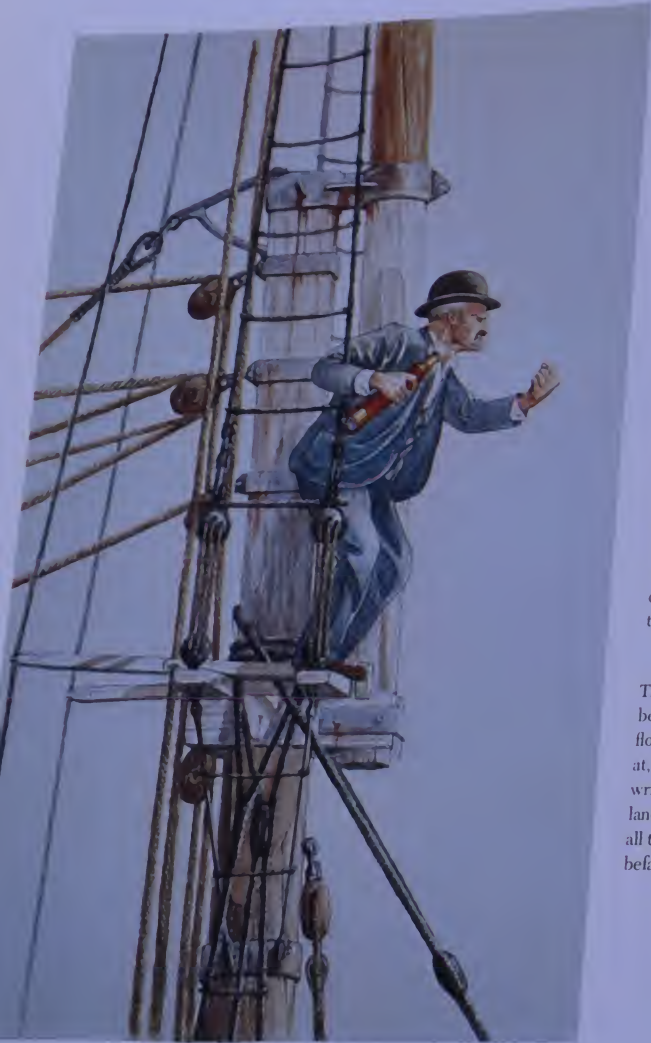


Fighting Whale

Then all in one welded commotion came an invisible push from astern, while forward the boat seemed striking on a ledge; a gush of scalding vapor shot up near by; something rolled and tumbled like an earthquake beneath us. The whole crew were half suffocated as they were tossed helter-skelter into the white curdling cream of the squall. Squall, whale, and harpoon had all blended together; and the whale, merely grazed by the iron, escaped. Swimming round the boat we picked up the floating oars, and lashing them across the gunwale, tumbled back to our places. There we sat up to our knees in the sea, the water covering every rib and plank, so that to our downward gazing eyes the suspended craft seemed a coral boat grown up to us from the bottom of the ocean.

The wind increased to a howl; the waves dashed their bucklers together; the whole squall roared, forked, and cracked around us.





"Curses, He's Gone"

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, rising swiftly to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard, a subterraneous hum; and then all held their breaths; as bedraggled with trailing ropes, and harpoons, and lances, a vast form shot lengthwise, but obliquely from the sea. Shrouded in a thin drooping veil of mist, it hovered for a moment in the rain-bowed air; and then fell swamping back into the deep. Crushed thirty feet upwards, the waters flashed for an instant like heaps of fountains, then brokenly sank in a shower of flakes, leaving the circling surface creamed like new milk round the marble trunk of the whale.

The attentive ship having descried the whole fight, again came bearing down to the rescue, and dropping a boat, picked up the floating mariners, tubs, oars, and whatever else could be caught at, and safely landed them on her decks. Some sprained shoulders, wrists, and ankles; livid contusions; wrenched harpoons and lances, inextricable intricacies of rope! shattered oars and planks; all these were there; but no fatal or even serious ill seemed to have befallen any one.

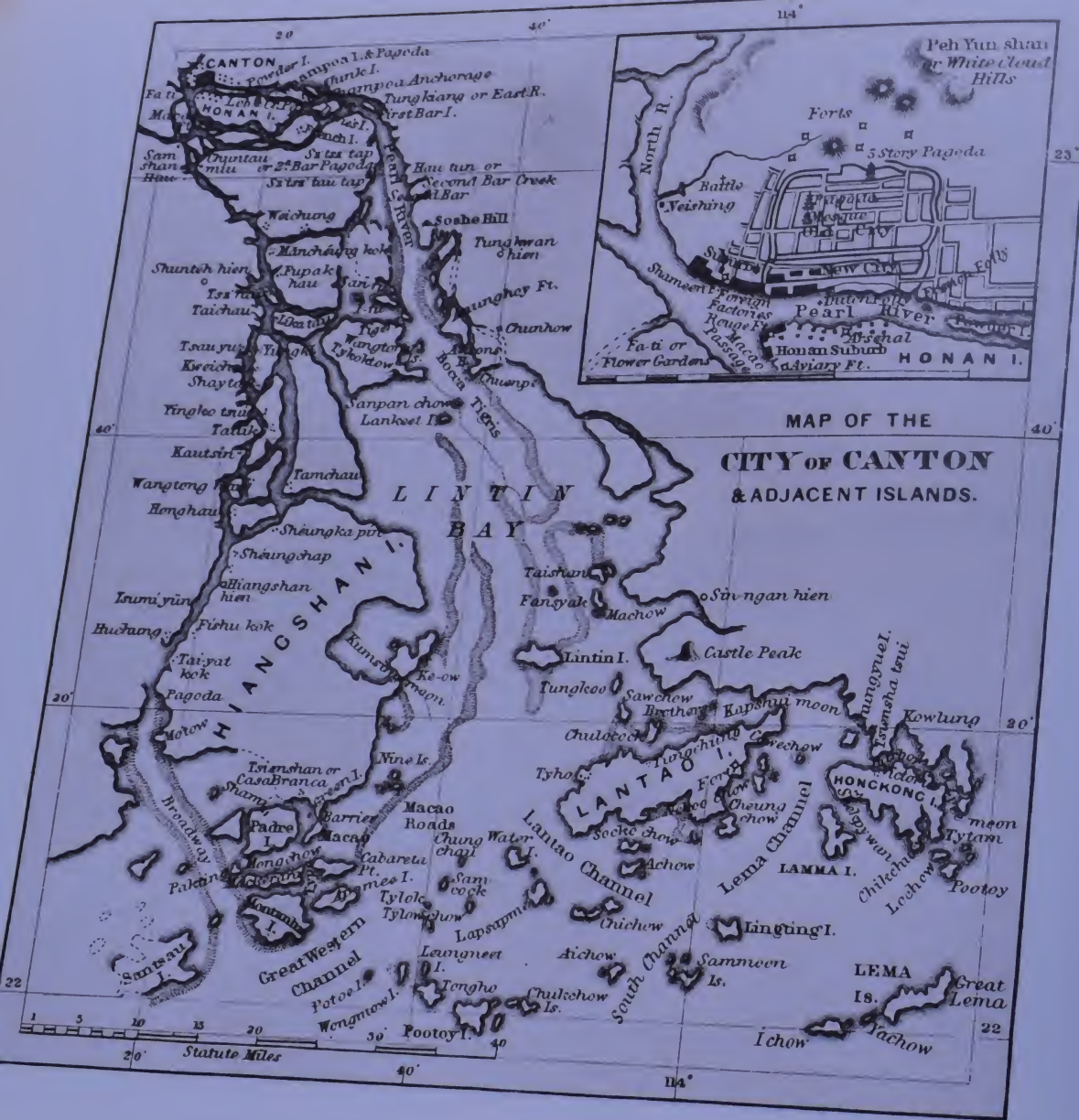




The Song of a Ship

*Ships are the nearest things to dreams that hands have ever made,
For somewhere deep in their oaken hearts the soul of a song is laid;
A soul that sings with the ship along through plunging hills of blue,
And fills her canvas cups of white with winds that drive her through.
For how could a nail and a piece of wood, tied with a canvas thread,
Become a nymph on moon-washed paths if the soul of the ship
were fled?*

*Her bosom throbs as her lover's arms clasp her in fond embrace,
And the joyous kiss of briny lips is fresh on her maiden face.
No storm can smother the hempen song that wells in her laughing throat—
Small wonder then that men go mad for the love of the sea and a boat.
For the singing sheet is a siren sweet that tugs at the hearts of men,
And down to the sea they must go once more though they
never come back again.*



"Land Ho!"—China

And finally there was the call from the lookout, "Land ho!" That off the bow was not another island, but the mainland, China. The ship came in through crowds of noisy, slatternly coastal sampans and big, clumsy-hulled junks. Typa Island was on the port hand, behind it Macao where the ship might later touch for cargo. Grand Lema Island in the Ladrone group was dead ahead and the captain brought the ship up into the wind to take the pilot aboard.

The pilot during most of the clipper years was a little, brown and extremely polite man. He grinned as he boarded from his sampan that his mate handled smartly enough and which had two wide-gazing eyes painted on the bows. His orders to the ship's wheelsman were exact and clear, and the captain stood and listened without objection and the wheelsman sent the smooth spokes over glistening and the ship had found her wind, swung up into Canton Bay.

The bay was broad, and long, and once the ship was squared away on the new tack past the Ladrone shoals the men could stand by the rail and gawk for a bit and listen to the old-time bosun. The big island over to starboard was Lantau; past that was Hong Kong. Up here on the starboard bow was Tonkoo roadstead, and the skinny little island fine on the starboard bow was called Lintin and in Chinese it meant "Solitary Nail."



Opium

The bosun hitched at his pants and pointed at the vessels in under the lee of Lintin, he was ready to impress his listeners.

He described the three hulks as British-owned. They received the opium carried from India, and from here the stuff was taken in local craft up the rivers and bays and along the coast, far into North China. It was all against Chinese law, so there was a lot of graft among the officials supposed to stop the trade.

The clipper sailors stood still, remembering old, fantastic fo'c'sle stories. They half-doubted the bosun; he seemed too certain. But there was little doubt about the hulks. It was obvious that not long ago they had been sturdy ships which had been roofed over in dockyard style. Tile chimneys rose through the roofs, and there were verandas where flowers bloomed in rows of pots. Along the hull, though, the gun ports were triced up, and the muzzles of the heavy-caliber pieces showed. Lookouts kept a watch on deck, and they wore side arms.

British captains were aboard the receiving hulks, the bosun said, and they were tough nuts who knew how to keep hold of the fortunes they had aboard and hold their crews in line. The crews were made up of Lascars, but the carpenters and the boatmen attached to each hulk were Chinese. The big, two-masted Chinese boats made fast alongside the hulks were called in the local style centipedes and scrambling dragons, and when they were under weigh fifty men rowed them. It was the centipedes and scrambling dragons that distributed the stuff for the native smugglers up in the back creeks and coves. The smugglers paid cash, sycee silver, to

the receiving hulk captains for what they bought. Then, the smugglers collected in return from the back-country agents.

The clipper crew felt a kind of awe. This was crime on a scale beyond their immediate comprehension. Opium to them, who welcomed anything named whiskey, was a dread drug. It bore a reputation of evil power beyond man's will to conquer, and those who used the stuff soon became weaklings and fools, and worse. But the neat, alertly guarded receiving hulks, the big Chinese river craft with their fifty oarsmen apiece and the fleet of clippers at anchor the other side of the island gave an impression of deliberate military organization. The scene had no resemblance to a smuggler base anywhere else in the world.

The opium clippers lay to with plenty of cable in under Lintin. They were barks of about three hundred tons, with an extremely rakish rig, black-hulled with a white gun strake that carried ten ports to a side. The cannons were run back in the gear, but they gleamed from polishing, and the mate on watch came down the deck with a strut, let go a shout for his bosun that made some of the sailors aboard the inward-bound clipper jump.

The American clipper bosun described that ship and her mate as British. But a number of vessels in the opium fleet were American-owned, he said, and had American officers aboard. The crews were Lascars and Portuguese seacunnies from Macao, who got good pay and should, because of the risks. A man was never really off watch in an opium smuggler, slept with one eye open and his ears stretched tight.



Mouths Were Made for Tankards

*Oh some are fond of dancing, and some are fond of dice,
And some are all for red lips, and pretty lasses' eyes;
But a right Jamaica puncheon is a finer prize
To the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.*

*Oh some that's good and godly ones they hold that it's a sin
To troll the jolly bowl around, and let the dollars spin;
But I'm for toleration and for drinking at an inn,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.*

*Oh some are sad and wretched folk that go in silken suits,
And there's a mort of wicked rogues that live in good reputes;
So I'm for drinking honestly, and dying in my boots,
Like an old bold mate of Henry Morgan.*

*Oh some are fond of red wine, and some are fond of white,
And some are all for dancing by the pale moonlight;
But rum alone's the tippie, and the heart's delight
Of the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.*

*Oh some are fond of Spanish wine, and some are fond of French,
And some'll swallow tay and stuff fit only for a wench;
But I'm for right Jamaica till I roll beneath the bench,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.*

*Oh some are fond of fiddles, and a song well sung,
And some are all for music for to lilt upon the tongue;
But mouths were made for tankards, and for sucking at the bung,
Says the old bold mate of Henry Morgan.*



The Chinese Junk

Once a pair of savages found a stranded tree,
 (One-piecee stick-pidgin—two-piecee man.
 Straddle-um—paddle-um—push-um off to sea.
 That way Foleign Debbil-boat began.)
 But before, and before, and ever so long before
 Any shape of sailing-craft was known,
 The Junk and Dhow had a stern and a bow,
 And a mast and a sail of their own—ahoy! alone!
 As they crashed across the Oceans on their own!

Once there was a pirate-ship, being blown ashore—
 (Plitty soon pilum up, s'posee no can tack.
 Seven-piecee stlong man pullum sta'boa'd oar.
 That way bling her head aloud and sail-o back.)
 But before, and before, and ever so long before
 Grand Commander Noah took the wheel,
 The Junk and the Dhow, though they look like anyhow,
 Had rudders reaching deep below their keel—ahoy! akeel!
 As they laid the Eastern Seas beneath their keel!

Once there was a galliot yawing in a tide.
 (Too much foolee side-slip. How can stop?
 Man catchee tea-box lid—lasha longaside.
 That way make her plenty glip and sail first-chop.)
 But before, and before, and ever so long before
 Any such contrivances were used,
 The whole Confucian sea-board had standardised the lee-board.
 And hauled it up or dropped it as they choosed—
 or chose—or chused!
 According to the weather, when they cruised!

Once there was a caravel in a beam-sea roll—
 (Ca'go shiftee—alla dliftie—no can livee long.
 S'posum' nail-o boa'd acloss—makee ploper hol'?
 That way, ca'go sittum still, an' ship mo' stlong.)
 But before, and before, and ever so long before
 Any square-rigged vessel hove in sight,
 The Canton deep-sea craft carried bulkheads fore and aft,
 And took good care to keep 'em water-tight—atite—atite!
 From Amboyna to the Great Australian Bight!

Once there was a sailor-man singing just this way—
 (Too muchee yowl-o, sickum best flend!
 Singee all-same pullee lope—haul and belay!
 Hully up and coilum down an'—bite off end!)
 But before, and before, and ever so long before
 Any sort of chanty crossed our lips,
 The Junk and the Dhow, though they look like anyhow,
 Were the Mother and the Father of all Ships—
 ahoy!—a'ships!
 And of half the new inventions in our Ships!
 From Tarifa to Formosa in our Ships!
 From Socotra to Selankhor of the windlass and the anchor,
 And the Navigators' Compass in our Ships—ahoy!
 —our Ships!
 (O, hully up and coilum down and —bite—off—end!)



"All Hands Up Anchor!"

"All hands up anchor!" When that order was given, how we sprang to the bars, and heaved round that capstan, every man a Goliath, every tendon a hawser!—round, round it spun like a sphere, keeping time with our feet to the time of the fife till the cable was straight up and down, and the ship with her nose in the water.

"Heave and pull! Unship your bars, and make sail!" It was done! barmen, nippermen, tierres, veerers, idlers and all, scrambled up the ladder to the braces and halyards, while like monkeys in palm trees, the sail-loosers ran out on those broad boughs, our yards; and down fell the sails like white clouds from the ether—topsails, top-gallants, and royals, and away we ran with the halyards, till every sheet was distended.

"Once more to the bars! Heave, my hearties, heave hard!" With a jerk and a yerk, we broke ground; and up to our bows came several thousand pounds of old iron, in the shape of our ponderous anchor.

Tacking Out

The weather-leech of the topsail shivers,
The bouchines strain, and the lee-shrouds slacken,
The braces are taut, the lithe boom quivers,
And the waves with the coming squall-cloud blacken.

Open one point on the weather-bow,
Is the lighthouse tall on Fire Island Head.
There's a shade of doubt on the captain's brow,
And the pilot watches the heaving lead.

I stand at the wheel, and with eager eye
To sea and to sky and to shore I gaze,
Till the muttered order of "Full and by!"
Is suddenly changed for "Full for stays!"

The ship bends lower before the breeze,
As her broadside fair to the blast she lays;
And she swifter springs to the rising seas,
As the pilot calls, "Stand by for stays!"

It is silence all, as each in his place,
With the gathered coil in his hardened hands,
By tack and bouchine, by sheet and brace,
Waiting the watchword impatient stands.

And the light on Fire Island Head draws near,
As, trumpet-winged, the pilot's shout
From his post on the bowsprit's heel I hear,
With the welcome call of "Ready! About!"

No time to spare! It is touch and go;
And the captain growls, "Down helm! hard down!"
As my weight on the whirling spokes I throw,
While heaven grows black with the storm-cloud's frown.

High o'er the knight-heads flies the spray
As we meet the shock of the plunging sea,
And my shoulder stiff to the wheel I lay,
As I answer, "Ay, ay, sir! Ha-ard a-ho!"

With the swerving leap of a startled steer,
The ship flies fast in the eye of the wind,
The dangerous shoals on the lee recede,
And the headland white we have left behind.

The topsails flutter, the jibs collapse,
And belly and tug at the groaning cleats;
The spanker slats, and the mainsail flaps,
And thunders the order, "Tacks and sheets!"

Mid the rattle of blocks and the tramp of the crew,
Hisses the rain of the rushing squall:
The sails are aback from clew to clew,
And now is the moment for "Mainsail, haul!"

And the heavy yards, like a baby's toy,
By fifty strong arms are swiftly swung;
She holds her way, and I look with joy
For the first white spray o'er the bulwarks flung.

"Let go, and haul!" 'Tis the last command,
And the head-sails fill to the blast once more;
Astern and to leeward lies the land,
With its breakers white on the shingly shore.

What matters the reef, or the rain, or the squall?
I steady the helm for the open sea;
The first mate clamors, "Belay, there, all!"
And the captain's breath once more comes free.

And so off shore let the good ship fly;
Little care I how the gusts may blow,
In my fo'castle bunk, in a jacket dry,
Eight bells have struck, and my watch is below.



Malayan Pirates

Just before daylight Captain Archer came to me, and roused me, saying that there were some suspicious looking sails in sight. I sprang up and could readily see with my night glass two proas coming out from under the land a few miles to the northward. I at once ordered all hands called, and as the wind had got round northeast, although still light, I immediately got under weigh and made all sail. Meanwhile the proas were standing down toward us, and as the daylight broke it was evident that they were full of men.

The *Mystic*, as was quite common in those days, carried a couple of 24 pounders, with a fair amount of ammunition, and we had, in addition to the ship's muskets, the rifles I had purchased at Valparaiso. So we were unusually well prepared in that direction, and, having Captain Archer's crew, we were nearly doubly manned. Still, so far as force was concerned, we were outnumbered by the Malays in the proas five to one. It would never do to let them get on board of us, for in a hand-to-hand fight we should have much the worst of it.

Captain Archer and I agreed to keep the proas at bay with the 24 pounders. Captain Archer went aft to take over the wheel and luff the ship, as I prepared the guns.



"Put your helm down, my man; look out. Captain Kelson! Let draw the headsheets! Meet her with the helm; meet her!" The *Mystic* came up in the wind, the head sails flapped; I watched my chance, got a good sight with the gun, which was loaded with a solid shot, and pulled the lock-string! As the smoke blew to leeward I sprang on the rail, and as the ship payed off and the sails filled, the foremast of the leading proas snapped off a few feet above the deck and fell overboard with a great crash dragging with it the heavy lateen sail!

"Good shot, Kelson!" shouted Captain Archer from the poop as our men cheered. We expected the second proa to heave to and go to the assistance of her companion, but she passed her without pausing, and with her sweeps out and heavily manned she bore rapidly down upon us. I ordered the starboard gun run over to the port side and tried several shots at the approaching proa, but, although I hit her once I did not seem to inflict very serious damage. So I then had both 24 pounders loaded with shrapnel and langridge, and determined to fight it out at closer quarters.

Stationing both my officers and the carpenter who was a splendid shot, on the quarter-deck with rifles, I ordered them to pick off

the men who seemed to be the leaders, and then waited for the approach of the proa.

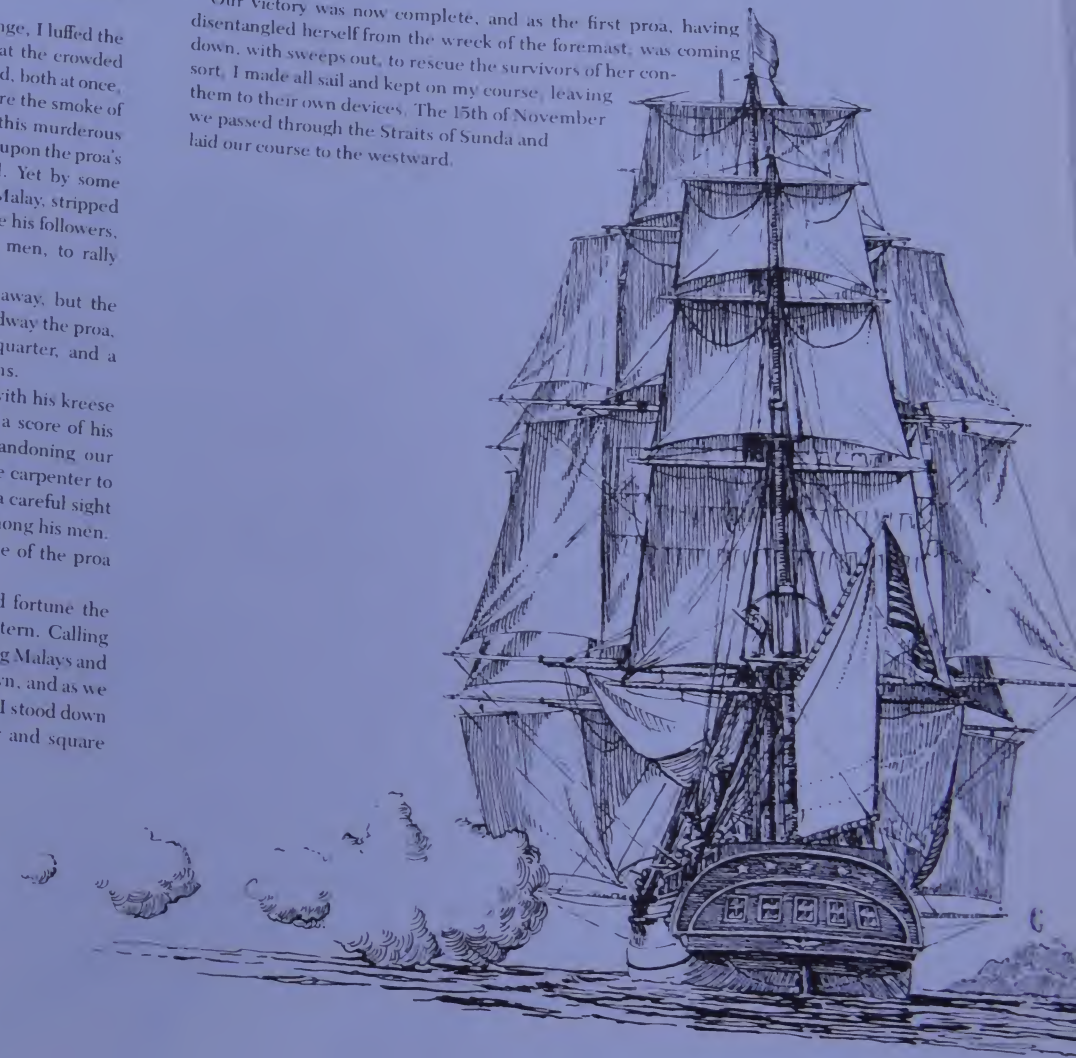
When the proa had crept up within easy rifle range, I luffed the ship up, as before, and getting a deliberate aim at the crowded deck, depressed the guns and fired them at the word, both at once, point blank, reloading and repeating the dose before the smoke of the first discharge had cleared away. The effect of this murderous fire, at such close quarters, upon the crowd massed upon the proa's deck was terrific, and the slaughter was frightful. Yet by some strange chance, the captain, a tall, vicious-looking Malay, stripped to the waist and waving a naked kreesse to encourage his followers, had escaped uninjured, and was shouting to his men, to rally them, with the evident intent of boarding us.

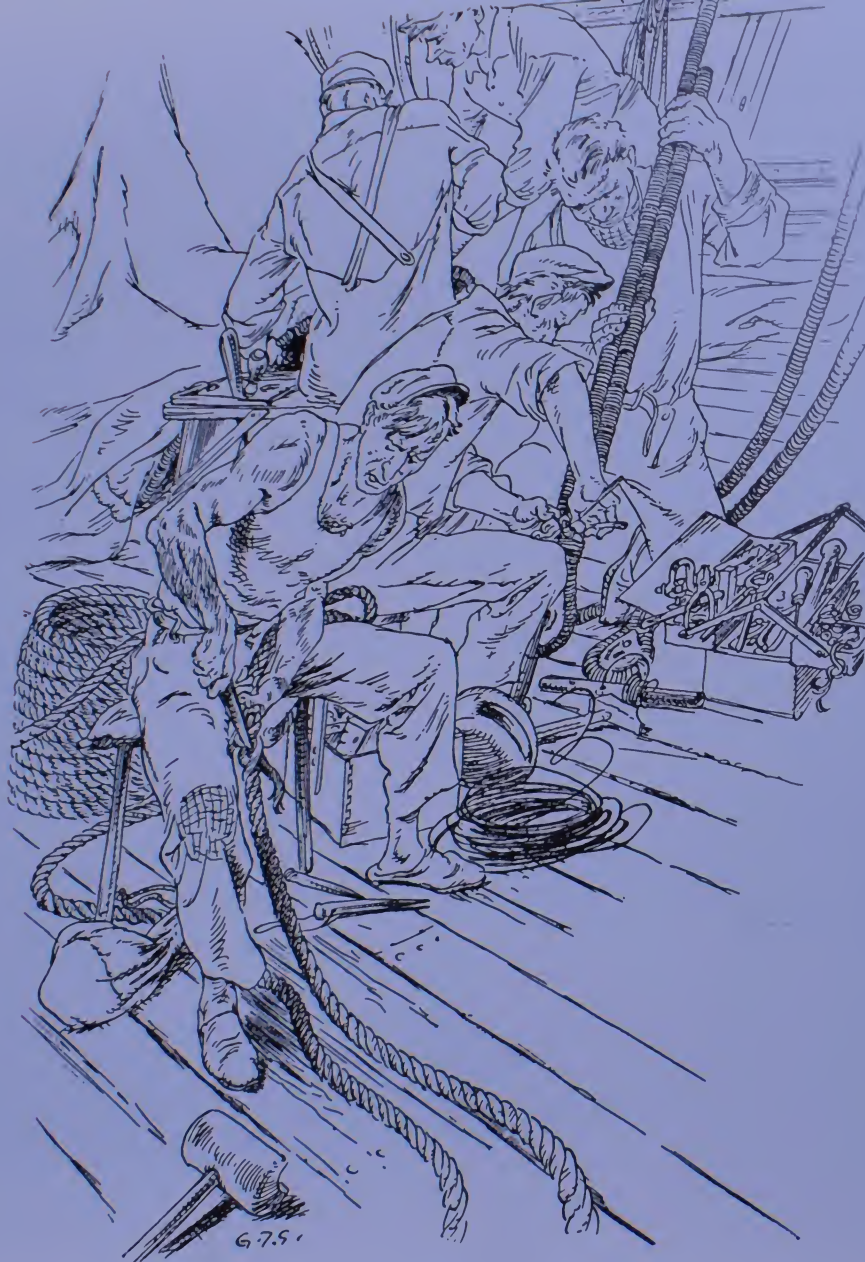
Captain Archer had meanwhile filled our ship away, but the wind was light, and before we had fairly gained headway the proa, with the sweeps out, shot under our starboard quarter, and a grapnel thrown from her caught in our mizzen chains.

The pirate captain at once sprang forward, and, with his kreesse in his mouth, scrambled up our side, followed by a score of his men, and gained the poop deck of the ship! Abandoning our battery, we gathered in the waist, and I called to the carpenter to pick off the Malay captain. He nodded, and, taking a careful sight with his rifle, he fired, and the Malayan fell dead among his men. Our other riflemen were meanwhile dropping those of the proa who had followed their captain.

Just then the wind freshened, and by great good fortune the proa's grapnel disengaged itself and she dropped astern. Calling upon my men, we made a dash upon the few remaining Malays and fairly drove them overboard. I then put the helm down, and as we came round on the other tack and gathered headway, I stood down on the proa, a good wrap full, and striking her fair and square amidships cut her to the water's edge.

Our victory was now complete, and as the first proa, having disentangled herself from the wreck of the foremast, was coming down, with sweeps out, to rescue the survivors of her consort, I made all sail and kept on my course, leaving them to their own devices. The 15th of November we passed through the Straits of Sunda and laid our course to the westward.





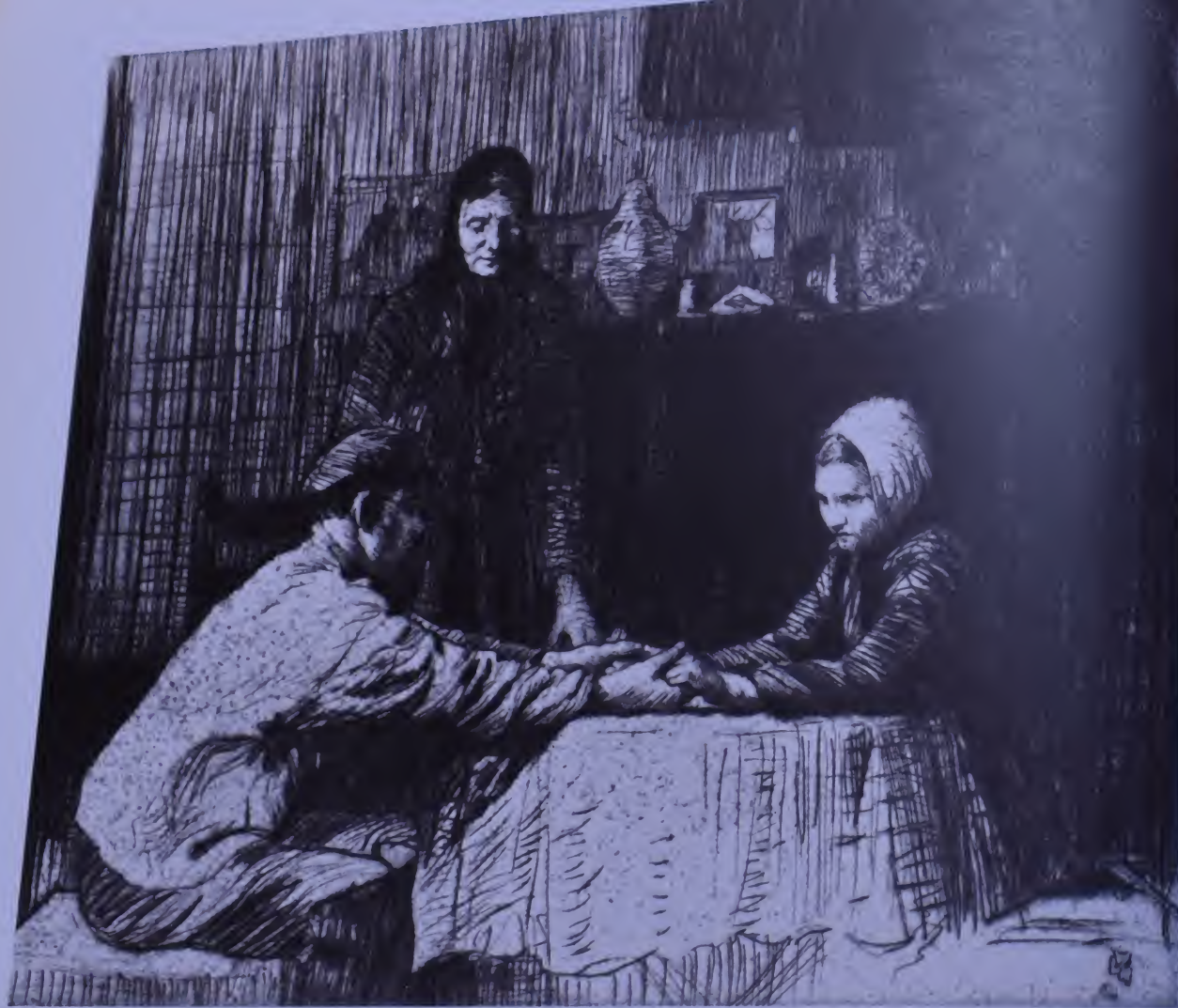
"A Sailor-Man"

The business of a thorough-bred sailor is a special calling, as much of a regular trade as a carpenter's or lock-smith's. Indeed, it requires considerably more adroitness, and far more versatility of talent.

A thorough sailor must understand much of other avocations. He must be a bit of an embroiderer, to work fanciful collars of hempen lace about the shrouds; he must be something of a weaver, to weave mats of rope-yarns for lashings to the boats; he must have a touch of millinery, so as to tie graceful bows and knots, such as *Matthew Walker's roses*, and *Turk's heads*; he must be a bit of a musician, in order to sing out at the halyards; he must be a sort of jeweler, to set dead-eyes in the standing rigging; he must be a carpenter, to enable him to make a jury-mast out of a yard in case of emergency; he must be a sempstress, to darn and mend the sails; a ropemaker, to twist *marline* and *Spanish foxes*; a blacksmith, to make hooks and thimbles for the blocks; in short, he must be a sort of Jack of all trades, in order to master his own. And this, perhaps, in a greater or less degree, is pretty much the case with all things else; for you know nothing till you know all; which is the reason we never know any thing.

A sailor, also, in working at the rigging, uses special tools peculiar to his calling—*fids*, *serving-mallets*, *toggles*, *prickers*, *marling-spikes*, *palms*, *heavers*, and many more. The smaller sort he generally carries with him from ship to ship in a sort of canvas reticule.

The estimation in which a ship's crew hold the knowledge of such accomplishments as these, is expressed in the phrase they apply to one who is a clever practitioner. To distinguish such a mariner from those who merely *'hand, reef, and steer'*, that is, run aloft, furl sails, haul ropes, and stand at the wheel, they say he is *'a sailor-man'*; which means that he not only knows how to reef a topsail, but is an artist in the rigging.



Memories

*All the sheets are clacking, all the blocks are whining,
The sails are frozen stiff and the wetted decks are shining;
The reef's in the topsails, and it's coming on to blow,
And I think of the dear girl I left long ago.*

*Grey were her eyes, and her hair was long and bonny,
Golden was her hair, like the wild bees' honey.
And I was but a dog, and a mad one to despise,
The gold of her hair and the grey of her eyes.*

*There's the sea before me, and my home's behind me,
And beyond there the strange lands where nobody will mind me,
No one but the girls with the paint upon their cheeks,
Who sell away their beauty to whomsoever seeks.*

*There'll be drink and women there, and songs and laughter,
Peace from what is past and from all that follows after;
And a fellow will forget how a woman lies awake,
Lonely in the night watch crying for his sake.*

*Black it blows and bad and it howls like slaughter,
And the ship she shudders as she takes the water.
Hissing flies the spindrift like a windblown smoke,
And I think of a woman and a heart I broke.*

The Struggle at the Wheel-1

I grappled with the kicking fury of the spokes. In a minute I was in a lather of sweat, though ice was already forming on my oilskins. A series of shocks ran up my arms, through my shoulders to my jolted spine. I was lifted bodily from my feet, suspended by my stretched hands alone, until a weather-roll of the overborne hull enabled me to catch my booted heel in the stanchion of the wheel-grating, thus securing a purchase which enabled me to master that immediate flurry. Then the ship appeared to recognize my familiar touch, she calmed down, leaned over until I saw the foam-crest piled three feet high above her lee-rail, and snorted straight through the smother like a racehorse.

"Keep her that way!" Captain Fegan approved.

But being at the *Dovenby's* wheel that night was not a picnic—far from it. Never before under my hands had the ship been so restive. She played possum, affected to be controlled, until she fancied I was lulled into my old belief in her subservience, then—with a crash and a roar she was fighting savagely for her freedom, and not caring how she fought. The tiny glimmer of light in the binnacle showed her restless head swinging four, even five,

points on either side of her allotted course. Once she all but ran away altogether, threatening to broach-to and fall over on her beam ends. Tired out, Skilly aided valiantly, but his shrimp-like weight hardly helped to tip the balance.

"Steering all right?" asked Fegan, coming aft, an unseen presence, from his keen vigil by the poop-rail.

"Ay, ay, sir—a bit frisky!" I boasted.

"Watch her, boy. They're in trouble for'ard there!" He passed to leeward of the binnacle and stood, back to the wheel, grasping the spokes there in an underhand way. "Nip for'ard, you," he instructed Skilly. "Ask the mate how it goes." But Skilly had to wait before essaying that passage. The ship suddenly took the bit in her teeth and rioted ecstatically, as if stung by a Gargantuan horse-fly. She broke away from my hold, she spun Fegan round until his big body was on top of me, crushing me into the deck—or so it seemed—and, swinging her quarter toward the run of the high seas, she pooped. It seemed as if the end had come. Sheer tonnage of icy water crushed me down to my knees. I was turned round, the spokes torn from my hold; a kick of the wheel caused one spoke to hit me excruciatingly under the chin—it was almost a knock-out. Stars spun in my brain. For some reason the heel of the skipper's sea-boot was grinding into my mouth; I felt a tooth snap and then another. It didn't seem to matter a lot, obviously, my dazed senses informed me, she was already sinking; nothing could fetch her up again. Her reserve of buoyancy had been battered out of her.

There was a curiosity as to what death might be like, that was all. One's senses were stunned, so that fear and normal emotions were paralyzed. It was like hovering on the edge of sleep before plunging into blissful unconsciousness.



The Struggle at the Wheel-II



But interest in life returned as the stern soared high, hurling Fegan for'ard against the binnacle, round which his lumpy body seemed to curl. I got upright and grabbed the whirling spokes, savagely I ground them down, ready to snap them like carrots if they refused to come. There is a resistless quality in the human body at such times that is superior to will and muscle. I was blazing angry—crazily so, ready to run berserk.

As Fegan pulled himself upright—he had been hurt inside—to and behold! Skilly was there, warping himself aft by the rail of the cabin skylight. Whilst we had grappled with the frantic helm he had been washed for'ard, down the ladder, half-way along the main-deck. He said he had been carried clean overboard and washed back again. The ship demanded close watching every minute. Back at the lee-helm Skilly worked like a horse, taking the load from me as I hove up the spokes, standing by for an extra heave as I ran them down. This was no nice steering, with the turn of a spoke either way sufficing to control the blustering fabric, it meant hard-up and hard-down every time the lubber's point swung past the compass-point which was our designed course.

The *Dovenby* swung until the main yard-arms threatened to dip under the wave-tops on either side. If this swing were countered by savage helm-work, she pitched frantically, dipping her bow under until solid water was surging over the fo'c'sle, or the poop-rail was submerged. Time after time water rose to my armpits, tearing urgently at me; and the rope-lashing I had managed to bowline round my body seemed determined to cut me in halves.

Dawn took me unawares, and, in that latitude, at that time of year, it was a late dawn. It was also ominous in the extreme. There was not a patch of brightness anywhere—simply a lurid, low-hanging canopy of ragged cloud over all—the tattered edges joining the up-leaping seas to close in a very narrow horizon.

Sometimes the screaming squalls beat the rugged wave-tops flat, tearing them into slashing spindrift which laced the deep troughs into a patterned milkiness. The ship handled better in these squalls, giving me and Skilly a breathing-space which was sorely needed. But just as one became aware of momentary surcease the full fury of the squall died, the waves piled mountainously, and the ship was at her old cavorting tricks again, seeming intent on tying a Carrick bend in herself.

It was a long time before details along the decks and aloft grew out of the filthy yellow-greyness that was daylight. Water crashed aboard pitilessly over the fore brace-blocks, the main and the mizen alike. Up aloft all was dishevelment. Much sail had been shortened after darkness fell, and it had been clumsily stowed, because of the high wind-force and the cold, which had frozen the drenched canvas into the likeness of armor-plating. There were "Irish pennants" blowing loose in bights to leeward all over. What the crew were doing I could not see.

No smoke came from the galley—the funnel had gone overboard long before. The lee lifeboat had vanished, too—the davits swinging drunkenly. The dinghy, normally stowed on the fore-house, was simply a faggot of broken staves—a sea had fallen and broken it small. Some of the washports had been torn from their hinges. Half the ropes, braces and downhauls and sheets, had been washed through the scupper-holes, and trailed overside like fantastic weeds. The ship was disheveled and forlorn. Something was missing from her bulwarks, too—abreast the fore-hatch the cargo-doors had been torn away, and ropes had been laced across the gap to safeguard the crew.

Just then Skilly collapsed, utterly worn-out. I'd noticed a slackening in the aid he gave me, but had been too busy to give him much attention.

"Nother hand to the lee-wheel!" bellowed Fegan, hurrying to the poop-break, whence he returned to lift the cadet like an infant and carry him—not to the cabin—but to the saturated half-deck. No favors were shown to human weakness aboard the *Dovenby*!

He who came was an able seaman, one of the best men aboard, the first to scramble aloft at the call, the last to descend; quick to lay out on a scrabbling yard-arm, a leading shantyman, apt to drink

to excess in port, and to work like four men at sea when things were going badly.

"Take the lee-wheel!" ordered Fegan.

"Ay, ay, sir," said Hurley crisply. He caught the wheel in its swing, and fell into position, hitching the lashing-rope about his body, bracing himself on wide feet against the agony-throes of the riotous craft.

I wanted to keep the lubber-line notched as steadily on the compass point as if the *Dovenby* were idling through the lazy Trades. Instead, in the wilder flurries, that black line swung incredibly—the ship took the bit in her teeth and ran away against a hard-over helm.

The ship's head whirled off the wind, dead against the ground-down helm—a spoke caught Hurley under the chin and almost broke his jaw!—and the main topsail went dead aback with a soul-shattering flap. The wind, previously on the beam, was now right aft; a terrific sea towered to the full height of the gaff-peak, halted as if licking its sinful lips in anticipation of ruin, then fell.

If I hadn't been wedged between box and wheel I should have been torn away and sluiced overboard, for in its transit that sea flattened the hurricane-rails of the lee-poop as if they were toffee-sticks. Hurley was carried to the extent of his lashing, which compressed his tough body so straitly that he coughed and doubled up inanimately. The foresail gave an unholy thump-thump and split in several places at once; that was all that saved the ship from total loss. For, with the wind-pressure eased for'ard, the helm came into effect, and though I hove up the spokes desperately to counter the wind'ard swing, the bow was definitely in the wind's eye before I had recovered my breath—jolted from my lungs by the excruciating impact of that great sea. I could see nothing of Captain Fegan. For once that wily man had been taken unawares. What I could see was that the cabin skylight was stove in like an eggshell, that the teakwood chart-house appeared to be shifted bodily from its moorings and was tilted at an odd angle to the vertical, that the whole for'ard poop-rail had gone, complete with bucket-racks, and that the waist was seethingly full of boiling foam.

The Struggle at the Wheel—in

As if to atone for her friskiness the ship was now tractable, answering every spoke of the wheel up or down; snorting along as if running before a vigorous north-east Trade. Hurley remained unconscious, doubled in his lashing like a half-empty sack in a sling. There was an awe-inspiring sense of loneliness everywhere. The fore-part of the ship, less than 200 feet from my position, holding practically all the crew, was as remote as if in the moon. Call as I might—in gasping intervals between tending the helm—no answer came. I wanted help to leeward; and, shaken to the core by that recent devastation, I wanted to be relieved, to spend a blissful minute under cover away from the merciless drive of the wind and the sledge-hammer blows of the boarding seas. My young soul started to panic.

But the reappearance of the skipper stiffened my wavering resolution. After all, he'd sent Hurley to the lee-wheel, which showed he had confidence in me; and the surest way to stiffen human confidence is to assure it that it is indomitable. When Fegan came crawling on hands and knees up the lee-poop-ladder I knew that I'd got to stick it out, just as he was doing. He was purple-faced, breathless; his oilskin slicker had been torn off him, and when he started to walk he limped awkwardly. He did not swear, was not even wrathful.

"I've broken my pipe!" was all the immediate comment he made. He straddled wide at the binnacle, looking aloft, then down into the bowl. The ship's nose was notched as if for ever exactly on its course.

"One day I'll make a helmsman of ye, young Shaw!" he commended. Then he started forward to ascertain the exact position there for himself. And the fury of the gale shut down again.

Fegan came back from his splintering expedition and the very strong fore-topmast stay-sail was hauled up the stay; it helped to counteract the main topsail to some extent. "What's wrong with yon felly?" the captain asked, about Hurley, still limp in the

holding-rope. He turned him over. I imagined the seaman to be dead. The blow of that sea should have sufficed to cut him in two, but he was alive—just

"As if we weren't short-handed enough!" Fegan grumbled. But he carried Hurley into the chart-room, now dismantled, and handed him over to the bewildered steward.

As the ship lost her sea-kindliness again and began to fret on the helm, I had to appeal for a new hand to leeward. "Stick it out as well as ye can," said Fegan, and gave me a snifter of rum, which helped a lot. After that four-finger nip I felt capable of grinding the wheel off its spindle, but the effect died away after a while, leaving weariness.

Steering demanded too much concentrated attention to permit of much forward-looking, to see how the men progressed. With her freshened liveliness the ship took all my care, and the exertion, too, of all my strength. The wheel was never still—it was hard-up, hard-down incessantly. The number of times I was torn from my foothold and pitched half-way over the topmost spoke I dare not mention, for fear of disbelief. Such physical exercise is exhausting. One's joints feel wrenched apart. After sweating plentifully, the momentary lulls and easements caused the icy wind to cut like a knife, the wet clothes froze on the numbing body. It was an inward glow of triumph and power only that kept me warm in spots.

Then matters were adjusted forward; with supreme difficulty the newly bent fore-topsail was set; under its weight the ship picked up her giddy heels and ran amok. What speed she made during the next hour I cannot say; but she seemed irresistible—mad with demoniacal fury, determined to shake off the overwhelming impulse of that record storm. There were times when she leaned over so startlingly that I—Fegan, too—had the impression she would capsize; and, so heeled, she screamed through the seas like a run-away torpedo.

I had got the hang of her and she behaved with comparative docility. The new canvas steadied her to some extent; but it was as if a perfect understanding had been reached between ship and steersman. We each respected the other's strength and will. Tired as I was, the sense of unlimited power informed my every nerve. There are moments in human existence when the mortal man climbs to equality with the gods. If I felt secretly contemptuous of Fegan, Perkins and all hands, that was my own affair. I controlled the ship; she and I were one in harmony of intention.

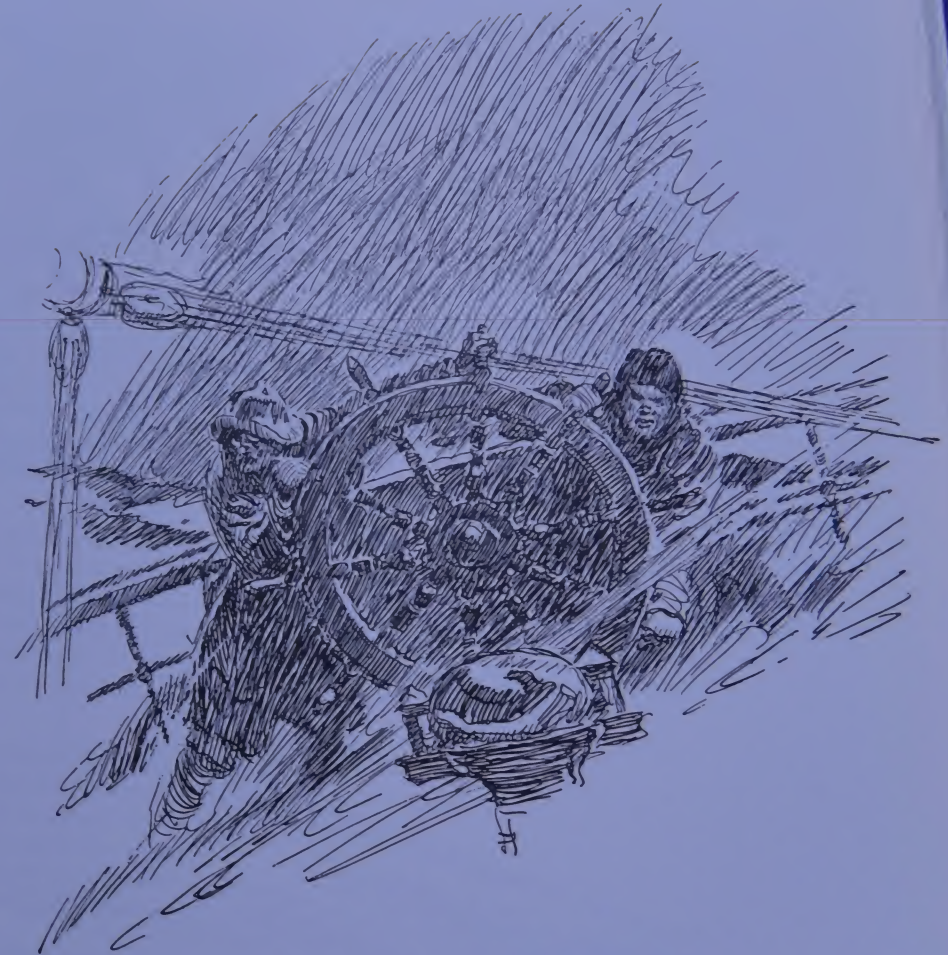
"Send a hand to relieve the wheel!" ordered Fegan. "This man has been here fifteen hours. Someone whom I failed to identify in the inky darkness had taken the lee-wheel when the topsail was set and the ship in some degree cleared up. It was another old-timer who came to relieve. He took station behind me, gripped the spokes over my hands, and hissed: 'I'll take her, sundown!' I relinquished my control reluctantly. As soon as I was free of the responsibility weakness flooded over me.

But I wanted surcease from the everlasting drive of wind and sea. I thought to crawl down to the half-deck, and indulge in a smoke, a rub-down, dry clothing—if any were to be found. As I hesitated at the poop-break before descending into the swirl of the waist, the ship ran away from her helm. The newcomer had not realized what 15 hours' steady slogging had taught me—that the ship was alive and furious. She reeled over—over. She roared up into the full blast of the wind; and I had the impression of titanic, overwhelming power climbing high to windward. Instinctively I leaped for the mizen-rigging and swarmed up, as high as time allowed. That gigantic wave crashed inboard. The ship vanished from view beneath a welter of ugly foam. She went dead. Things were fetching away aloft and on deck. The *Dovenby* was in her death-throes, so far as my instinct could make out.

I thought her going; but after a breathless eternity she shivered a little, fell back inert, shivered again, before hurling herself up to life. I heard my name called urgently.

"Get back to that wheel!" roared Fegan, when I replied. "The only man in the ship who can handle her, by all hell!" I went back, to stay until the next day grew out of night's screaming womb. They fed me and nourished me, when men went below to grapple with the shifted cargo by the light of smoky whale-oil lamps. They tended me like a Court favorite, and I nursed the *Dovenby* like any mother. Repeated attempts were made to give relief, but on each occasion the ship refused to be coaxed into subjection to another pair of hands. Each time I relinquished the weather spokes she behaved like a drunken slattern; each time I returned she calmed and gave reluctant obedience.

Twenty-eight hours of it, maybe more. Toward daylight the runts came frequently; but they lost their effect. There wasn't a prouder man afloat than I when I surrendered the spokes to a newcomer and staggered to my drenched bunk. Every effort had been worth while. In my young vanity I credited myself with saving that honest ship alive. Maybe I had.





Man Overboard!

The watch was up on the topsail-yard a-making fast the sail,
'N' Joe was swiggin' his gasket taut, 'n' I felt the stirrup give,
'N' he dropped sheer from the tops'l-yard 'n' barely cleared the rail,
'N' o' course, we bein' aloft, we couldn't do nothin' —
We couldn't lower a boat and go a-lookin' for him,
For it blew hard 'n' there was sech a sea runnin'
That no boat wouldn't live.

I seed him rise in the white o' the wake, I seed him lift a hand
('N' him in his oilskin suit 'n' all), I heard him lift a cry:
'N' there was his place on the yard 'n' all, 'n' the stirrup's busted strand.
'N' the old man said, "There's a cruel old sea runnin',
A cold green Barney's Bull of a sea runnin';
It's hard, but I ain't agoin' to let a boat be lowered."
So we left him there to die.

He couldn't have kept afloat for long an' him lashed up 'n' all,
'N' we couldn't see him for long, for the sea was blurred with the sleet 'n' snow,
'N' we couldn't think of him much because o' the snortin', screamin' squall.
There was a hand less at the halliards 'n' the braces,
'N' a name less when the watch spoke to the muster-roll,
'N' a empty bunk 'n' a pannikin as wasn't wanted
When the watch went below.

The Great Wandering Albatross

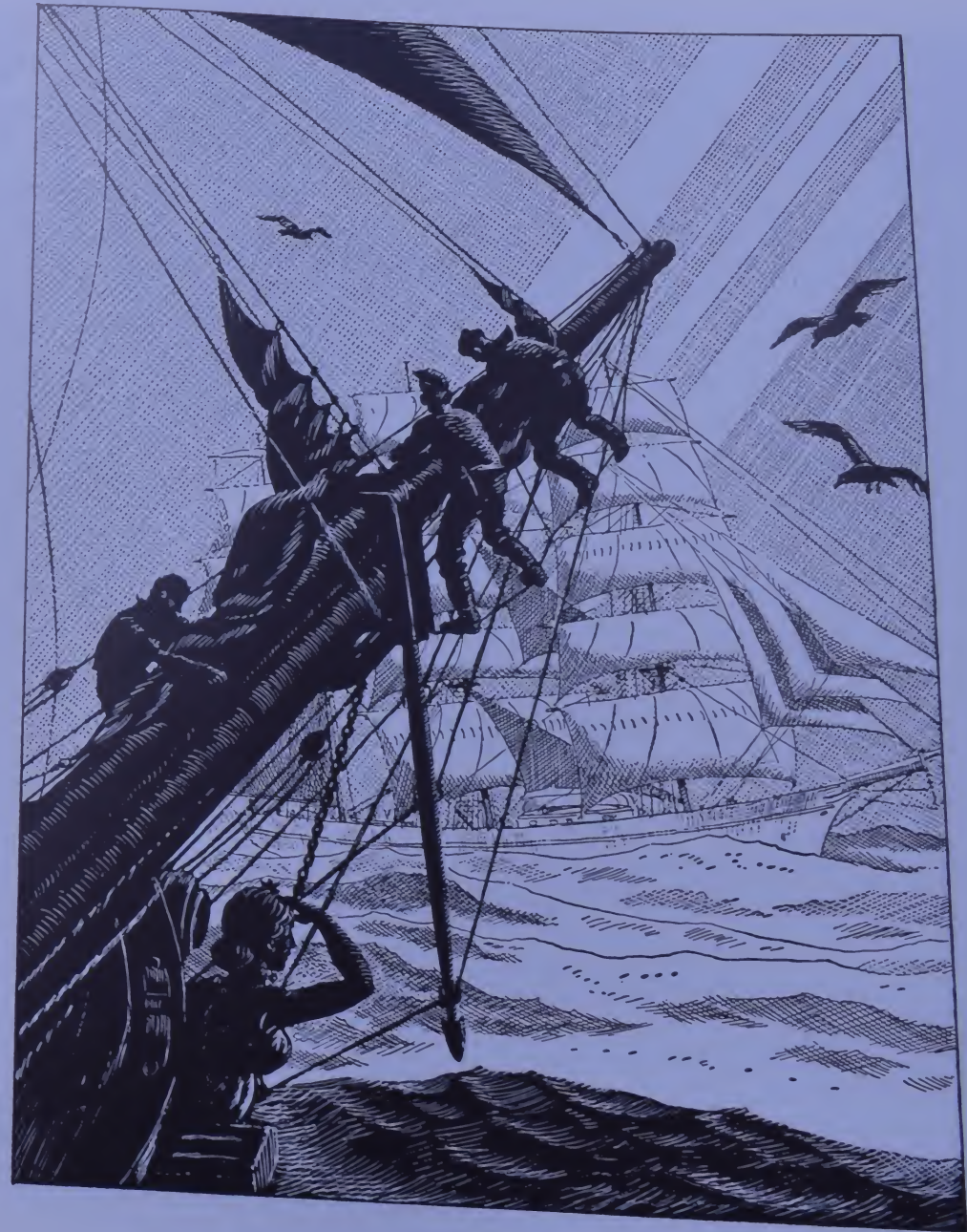
"Goneys and gullies on' all o' the birds o' the sea.
They ain't no birds, not really," said Billy the Dane.

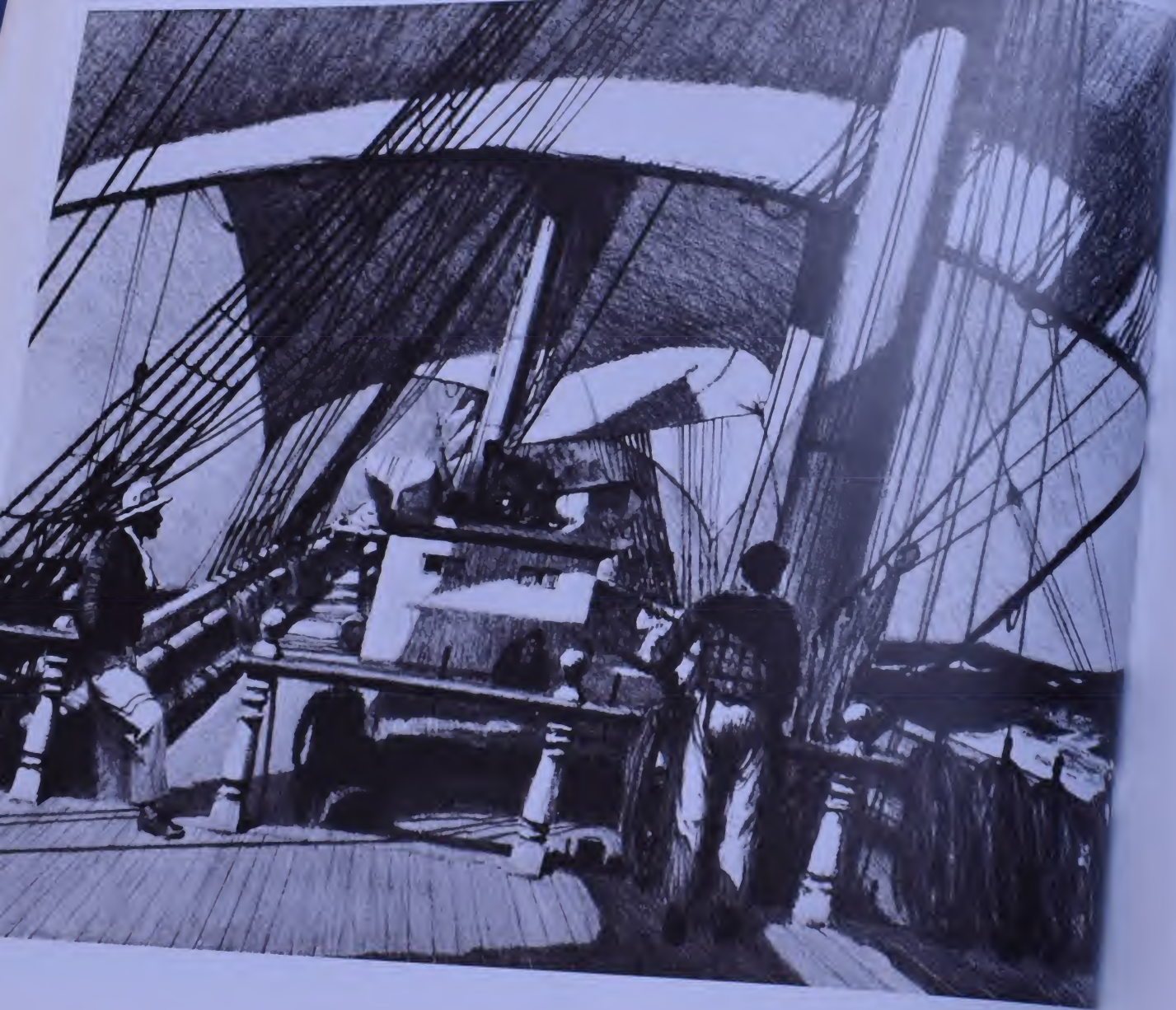
"Not mollies, nor gullies, nor goneys at all," said he,
"But simply the sperrits of mariners livin' again.

"Them birds goin' fishin' is nothin' but souls o' the drowned,
Souls of the drowned on' the kicked as are never no more;
An' that there haughty old albatross cruisin' around,
Belike he's Admiral Nelson or Admiral Noah.

"An' merry's the life they are living. They settle and dip,
They fishes, they never stands watches, they waggle their wings;
When a ship comes by, they fly to look at the ship
To see how the nowadays mariners manages things.

"When freezin' aloft in a snorter, I tell you I wish
(Though maybe it ain't like a Christian)—I wish I could be
A haughty old copper-bound albatross dipping for fish
And coming the proud over all o' the birds o' the sea."



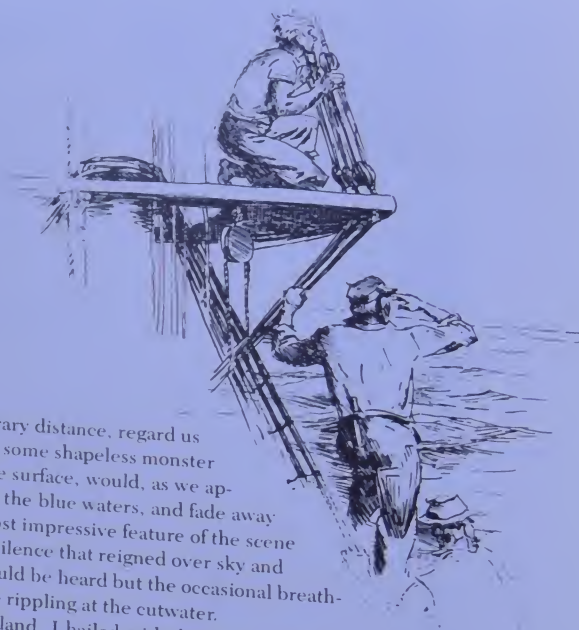


Flying Fish Weather

I can never forget the eighteen or twenty days during which the light trade-winds were silently sweeping us towards the islands. All that we had to do, when our course was determined on, was to square in the yards and keep the vessel before the breeze, and then the good ship and the steady gale did the rest between them. The man at the wheel never vexed the old lady with any superfluous steering, but, comfortably adjusting his limbs at the tiller, would doze away by the hour. True to her work, the *Dolly* headed to her course, and, like one of those characters who always do best when let alone, she jogged on her way like a veteran old seacer—as she was.

What a delightful, lazy, languid time we had whilst we were thus gliding along! There was nothing to be done, a circumstance that happily suited our disinclination to do anything. We abandoned the forepeak altogether, and spreading an awning over the fore-castle, slept, ate, and lounged under it the livelong day. Every one seemed to be under the influence of some narcotic. Even the officers aft, whose duty required them never to be seated whilst keeping a deck watch, vainly endeavored to keep on their pins; and were obliged invariably to compromise the matter by leaning up against the bulwarks and gazing abstractedly over the side. Reading was out of the question; take a book in your hand, and you were asleep in an instant.

Although I could not avoid yielding in a great measure to the general languor, still at times I contrived to shake off the spell, and to appreciate the beauty of the scene around me. The sky presented a clear expanse of the most delicate blue, except along the skirts of the horizon, where you might see a thin drapery of pale clouds which never varied their form or color. The long, measured, dirge-like swell of the Pacific came rolling along, with its surface broken by little tiny waves, sparkling in the sunshine. Every now and then a shoal of flying-fish, scared from the water under the bows, would leap into the air, and fall the next moment like a shower of silver into the sea. Then you would see the superb albacore, with his glittering sides, sailing aloft, and, often describing an arc in his descent, disappear on the surface of the water. Far off, the lofty jet of the whale might be seen, and nearer at hand the prowling shark, that villainous footpad of the seas, would come



skulking along, and, at a wary distance, regard us with his evil eye. At times some shapeless monster of the deep, floating on the surface, would, as we approached, sink slowly into the blue waters, and fade away from the sight. But the most impressive feature of the scene was the almost unbroken silence that reigned over sky and water. Scarcely a sound could be heard but the occasional breathing of the grampus and the rippling at the cutwater.

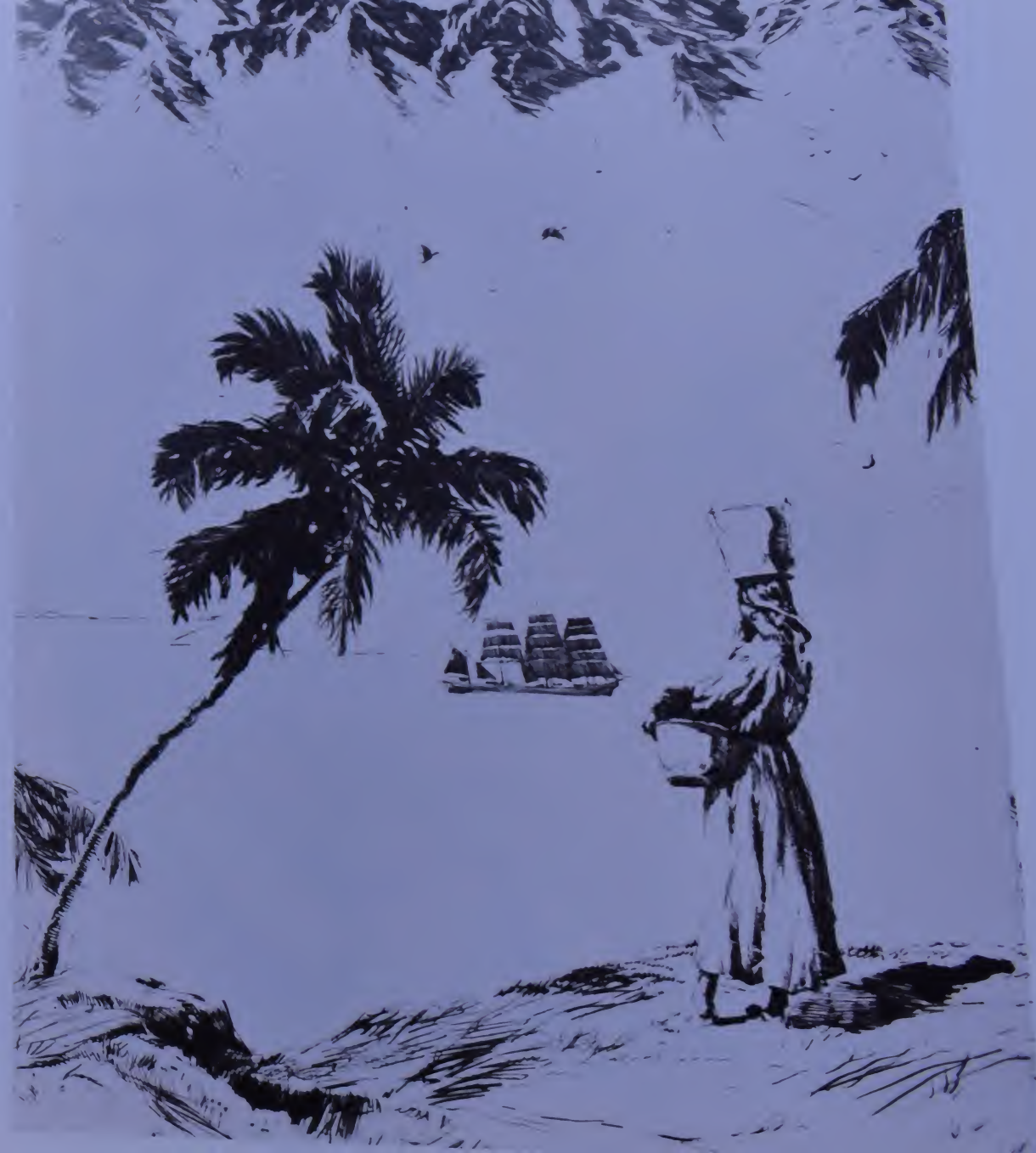
As we drew nearer the land, I hailed with delight the appearance of innumerable sea-fowl. Screaming and whirling in spiral tracks, they would accompany the vessel, and at times alight on our yards and stays. That piratical-looking fellow, appropriately named the man-of-war's hawk, with his blood-red bill and raven plumage, would come sweeping round us in gradually diminishing circles, till you could distinctly mark the strange flashings of his eye; and then, as if satisfied with his observation, would sail up into the air and disappear from the view. Soon, other evidences of our vicinity to the land were apparent, and it was not long before the glad announcement of its being in sight was heard from aloft—given with that peculiar prolongation of sound that a sailor loves—"Land ho!"

The captain, darting on deck from the cabin, bawled lustily for his spy-glass; the mate in still louder accents hailed the masthead with a tremendous "Where-away?" The black cook thrust his woolly head from the galley, and Boatswain, the dog, leaped up between the knightheads, and barked most furiously. Land ho! Aye, there it was. A hardly perceptible blue irregular outline, indicating the bold contour of the lofty heights of Nukuheva.

Island Stop

*The sloop's sails glow in the sun; the far sky burns.
Over the palm tree-tops wanders the dusk,
About the bows a chuckling ripple churns;
The land wind from the marshes smells of musk.
A star comes out; the moon is a pale husk;
Now, from the galley door, as supper nears,
Comes a sharp scent of meat and Spanish rusk
Fried in a pan. Far aft, where the lamp blears,
A seaman in a red shirt eyes the sails and steers.*

*Soon he will sight that isle in the dim bay
Where his mates saunter by the camp-fire's glow;
Soon will the birds scream, scared, and the bucks bray,
At the rattle and splash as the anchor is let go;
A block will pipe, and the oars grunt as they row,
He will meet his friends beneath the shadowy trees,
The moon's orb like a large lamp hanging low
Will see him stretched by the red blaze at ease,
Telling of the Indian girls, of ships, and of the seas.*





Paradise Island

Oh, you'll never know Hawaii 'til you've kissed an Island girl
And she's hung a ginger lei about your neck;
'Til you've danced the hula-hula on a beach of sand and pearl
And have eaten opihis by the peck.

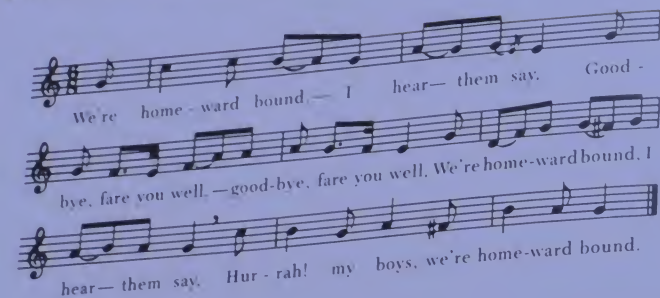
'Til you've hung your every garment on a big kamani tree
And have felt the foaming surf about your knees;
'Til you've plunged into the breakers with a cry of pagan glee
In a bathing suit of moonlight and a breeze.

'Til you've seen the lunar rainbow's phantom arch across the blue
And have watched the Southern Cross dip in the sea;
'Til the singing boys have stabbed your heart with music . . . thru and thru:
'Til you've raced the silver surf at Waikiki.

'Til you've slid down Ginger Jack . . . and every youngster knows the place;
'Til you've gorged on pig until you couldn't think;
'Til you've seen the path of fury strewn with white-hot lava lace
Where red Pele walks at Kilauea's brink.

'Til you've heard the old folks yarning of the days before today;
At a luau over bowls of fish and poi;
'Til you've gone aboard a steamer with intent to stay away
And have learned the meaning of "Aloha oe."

We're Homeward Bound



We're homeward bound this very day.

Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well.

We're homeward bound this very day.

Hurrah! my boys, we're homeward bound.

We're homeward bound for 'Frisco town.

Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well.

We're homeward bound for 'Frisco town.

Hurrah! my boys, we're homeward bound.

Oh, heave away, she's up and down.

Those 'Frisco girls, they've got us in tow.

And it's goodbye to Katie and goodnight to Nell.

Oh, it's goodbye again and fare you well.

And now I hear our first mate say.

Her anchor, boys, we soon will see.

We're homeward bound, 'tis a joyous sound.

I thought I heard our old man say.

Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well.

I thought I heard our old man say.

Hurrah! my boys, we're homeward bound.

Oh, 'Frisco Bay in three months and a day.

Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well.

Oh, 'Frisco Bay in three months and a day.

Hurrah! my boys, we're homeward bound.

We've got the fluke at last in sight.

Goodbye, fare you well, goodbye, fare you well.

We've got the fluke at last in sight.

Hurrah! my boys, we're homeward bound.

VAST HEAVING!



Among innumerable *yarns and twisters*" reeled off in our main-top during our pleasant run to the North, none could match those of Jack Chase.

Never was there better company than ever-glorious Jack. The things which ~~most~~ men only read of, or dream about, he had seen and experienced. He had been a dashing smuggler in his day, and could tell of a long nine-pounder rammed home with wads of French silks; of cartridges stuffed with the finest gunpowder tea; of cannister-shot full of West Indian sweetmeats; of sailor frocks and trowsers, quilted inside with costly laces; and table legs, hollow as musket barrels, compactly stowed with rare drugs and spices. He could tell of a wicked widow, too—a beautiful receiver of smuggled goods upon the English coast—who smiled so sweetly upon the smugglers when they sold her silks and laces, cheap as tape and gingham. She called them gallant fellows, hearts of game, and bade them bring her more.

He could tell of desperate fights with his British majesty's cutters, in midnight coves upon a stormy coast; of the capture of a reckless band, and their being drafted on board a man-of-war; of their swearing that their chief was slain; of a writ of habeas corpus sent on board for one of them for a debt—a reserved and handsome man—and his going ashore, strongly suspected of being the slaughtered captain, and this a successful scheme for his escape.

But more than all, Jack could tell of the battle of Navarino, for he had been a captain of one of the main-deck guns on board Admiral Codrington's flag-ship, the *Asia*. Were mine the style of stout old Chapman's Homer, even then I would scarce venture to give noble Jack's own version of this fight, wherein, on the 20th of October, A.D. 1827, thirty-two sail of Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Russians, attacked and vanquished in the Levant an Ottoman fleet of three ships-of-the-line, twenty-five frigates, and a swarm of fire ships and hornet craft.

"We bayed to be at them," said Jack; "and when we *did* open fire, we were like dolphin among the flying-fish. 'Every man take his bird' was the cry, when we trained our guns. And those guns all smoked like rows of Dutch pipe-bowls, my hearties! My gun's crew carried small flags in their bosoms, to nail to the mast in case the ship's colors were shot away. Stripped to the waistbands, we fought like skinned tigers, and bowled down the Turkish frigates like nine-pins. Among their shrouds—swarming thick with small-arm men, like flights of pigeons lighted on pine-trees—our

marines sent their leaden pease and gooseberries, like a shower of hail-stones in Labrador. It was a stormy time, my hearties! The blasted Turks pitched into the old *Asia's* hull a whole quarry of marble shot, each ball one hundred and fifty pounds. They knocked three port-holes into one. But we gave them better than they sent. 'Up and at them, my bull-dog!' said I, patting my gun on the breech; 'tear open hatchways in their Moslem sides!' White-Jacket, my lad, you ought to have been there. The bay was covered with masts and yards, as I have seen a raft of snags in the Arkansas River. Showers of burned rice and olives from the exploding foe fell upon us like manna in the wilderness. 'Allah! Allah! Mohammed! Mohammed!' split the air; some cried it out from the Turkish port-holes; others shrieked it forth from the drowning waters, their top-knots floating on their shaven skulls, like black-snakes on half-tide rocks. By those top-knots they believed that their Prophet would drag them up to Paradise, but they sank fifty fathoms, my hearties, to the bottom of the bay. 'Ain't the bloody 'Hometons going to strike yet?' cried my first loader, a Guernsey man, thrusting his neck out of the port-hole, and looking at the Turkish line-of-battle ship near by. That instant his head blew by me like a bursting Paixhan shot, and the flag of Ned Knowles himself was hauled down forever. We dragged his hull to one side, and avenged him with the cooper's anvil, which, endways, we rammed home; a mess-mate shoved in the dead man's bloody Scotch cap for the wad, and sent it flying into the line-of-battle ship. By the god of war! boys, we hardly left enough of that craft to boil a pot of water with. It was a hard day's work—a sad day's work, my hearties. That night, when all was over, I slept sound enough, with a box of cannister shot for my pillow!"

"But how did you feel, Jack, when the musket-ball carried away one of your hooks there?"

"Feel! only a finger the lighter. I have seven more left, besides thumbs; and they did good service, too, in the torn rigging the day after the fight; for you must know, my hearties, that the hardest work comes after the guns are run in. Three days I helped work, with one hand, in the rigging, in the same trowsers that I wore in the action; the blood had dried and stiffened; they looked like glazed red morocco."

Yet this Jack Chase had a heart in him like a mastodon's. I have seen him weep when a man was flogged at the gangway.

Bert's Yarn



He lolled on a bollard, a sun-burned son of the sea,
With ear-rings of brass and a jumper of dungaree,
"N' many a queer lash-up have I seen," says he,
"But the toughest horray o' the racket," he says, "I'll be sworn,
N' the roughest traverse I worked since the day I was born,
Was a packet o' Sailor's Delight as I scoffed in the seas o' the Horn.
"All day long in the calm she had rolled to the swell,
Rolling through fifty degrees till she clattered her bell;
N' then came snow, n' a squall, n' a wind was colder n' hell,
"It blew like the Bull of Barney, a beast of a breeze,
N' over the rail come the cold green lollopin' seas,
N' she went ashore at the dawn on the Ramirez.

"She was settlin' down by the stern when I got to the deck,
Her waist was a smother o' sea as was up to your neck,
N' her masts were gone, n' her rails, n' she was a wreck.
"We rigged up a tackle, a purchase, a sort of a shift,
To hoist the boats off o' the deck-house and get them adrift,
When her stern gives a sickenin' settle, her bows give a lift,
"N' comes a crash of green water as sets me afloat
With freezing fingers clutching the keel of a boat—
The bottom-up u haler—n' that was the juice of a note.
"Well, I clammers acrost o' the keel n' I gets me secured,
When I sees a face in the white o' the smother to looard,
So I gives 'im a 'and, n' be shot if it wasn't the stooard!
"So he climbs up forrard o' me, n' 'n' thanky,' a' says,
N' we sits n' shivers n' freeze to the bone wi' the sprays,
N' I sings 'Abel Brown,' n' the stooard he prays,
"Wi' never a dollop to sup nor a morsel to bite,
The lips of us blue with the cold n' the heads of us light,
Adrift in a Cape Horn sea for a day n' a night,
"N' then the stooard goes dotty n' puts a tune to his lip,
N' moans about Love like a dern old hen wi' the pip—
(I sets no store upon stooards—they ain't no use on a ship).
"N' mother, the looney cackles, 'come n' put Willy to bed!
So I says 'Dry up, or I'll fetch you a crack o' the head';
"The kettle's a-bilin', he answers, 'n' I'll go butter the bread.'
"N' he falls to singin' some shush about clinkin' a can,
N' at last he dies, so he does, n' I tells you, Jan,
I was glad when he did, for he weren't no fun for a man.
"So he falls forrard, he does, n' he closes his eye,
N' quiet he lays n' quiet I leaves him lie,
N' I was alone with his corp, n' the cold green sea and the sky.
"N' then I dithers, I guess, for the next as I knew
Was the voice of a mate as was sayin' to one of the crew,
"Easy, my son, wi' the brandy, be shot if he ain't comin'-to!"





Fog and Ice—II

In a moment we have closed with the ice and are hammering and grinding at the sheer glistening wall. At the first impact the boom goes with a crash! Then fore-to' gallant mast—yards—sails—rigging all hurtling to the head, driving the decks in! A shelf of solid ice, tons weight of it, crashes aboard and shatters the fore-hatch! Now there is a grind and scream of buckling iron, as the beams give to the strain—ring of stays and guy-ropes, parting at high tension—crash of splintering wood! The heaving monster draws off, reels, and comes at us again! Another blow and—

"Vast lowering! Hold on! Hold on the boat there!" The Old Man, come on deck with his treasured papers, has seen more than the wreck of the head! He runs to the compass—a look—then casts his eyes aloft. "Square mainyards!" His voice has the old confident ring; the ring we know. "Square mainyards! . . . A hand t' th' wheel!"

Doubting, we hang around the boat. She swings clear, all ready? The jar of a further blow sets us staggering for foothold! What chance? . . . "A hand t' th' wheel, here," roars the Old Man. Martin looks up . . . he goes back to his post.

A man at the wheel again! No longer the fearful sight of the main post deserted; no longer the jar and rattle of a handless helm!

Martin's action steadies us. What dread, when the oldest of us all stands there grasping the spokes, waiting the order? . . . We leave the swinging boat and hurry to the braces!

A 'chance' has come! The power of gales long since blown out is working a way for us; the ghostly descendants of towering Cape Horn 'greybeards' have come to our aid!

As we struck, sidling on the bows, the swell has swept our stern round the berg. Now we are head to wind and the big foresail is flat against the mast, straining sternward!

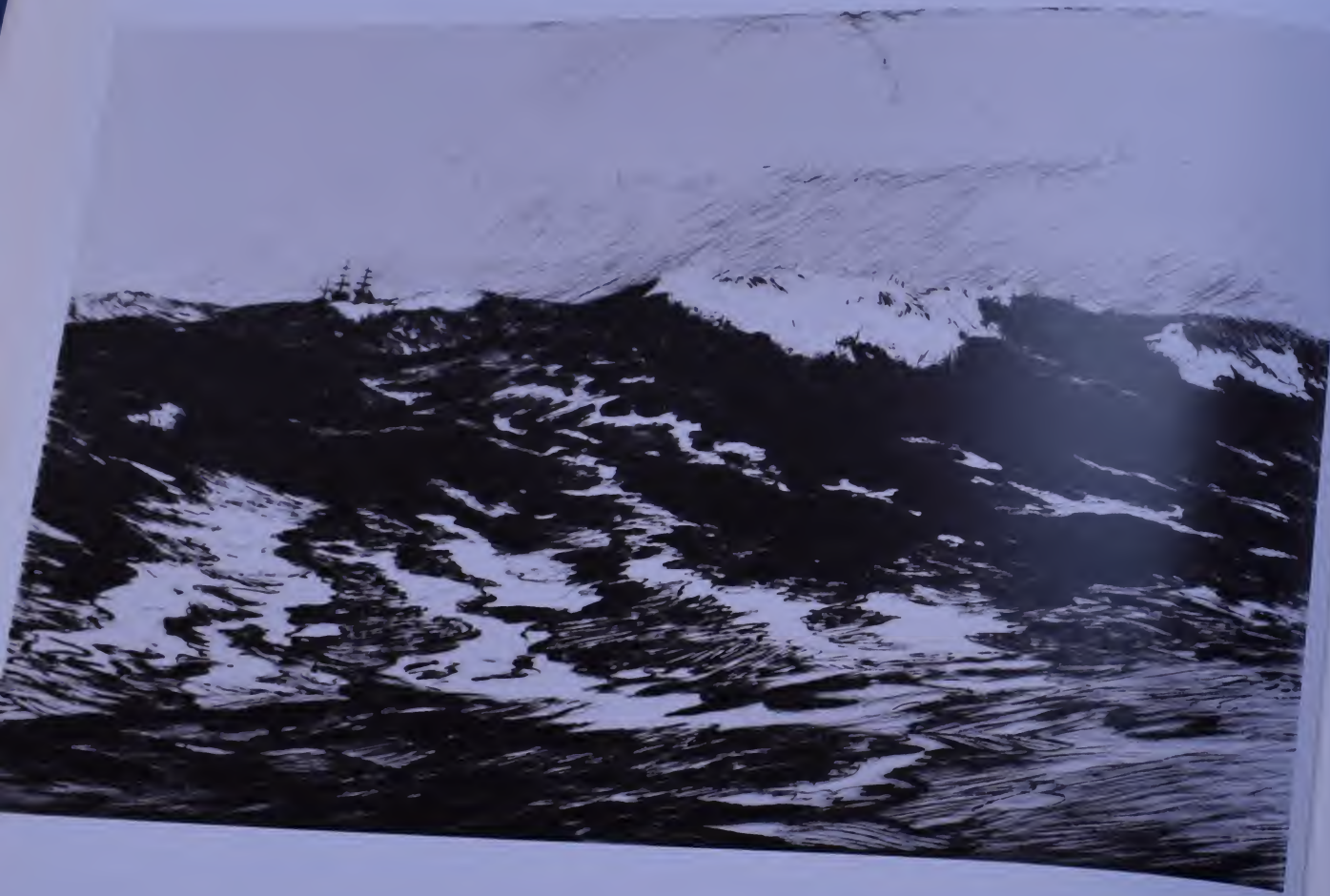
It is broad day, and we see the 'calf' plainly as we drift under stern-way apart. The gap widens! A foot—a yard—an oar's length! Now the wind stirs the canvas on the main—a clew lifts—the tops'ls rustle and blow out, drawing finely! Her head still swings!

"Foreyards! Le'go an' haul!" roars the Old Man. We are stern on to the main ice. Already the swell—recurving from the sheer base—is hissing and breaking about us. There is little room for stern-board. "Le'go an' haul!" We roar a heartening chorus as we drag the standing headyards in.

Slowly she brings up . . . gathers way . . . moves ahead! The 'calf' is dead to windward, the loom of the main ice astern and a-lee. The wind has strengthened; in parts the mist has cleared. Out to the south'ard a lift shows clear water. We are broad to the swell now, but sailing free as Martin keeps her off! From under the bows the broken boom (still tethered to us by stout guy-ropes) thunders and jars as we move through the water.

"Cut and clear away!" roars Old Jock. "Let her go!"

Aye, let her go! . . . We are off . . . crippled an' all . . . out for open sea again!



The Implacable Sea

... The sea has never been friendly to man. At most it has been the accomplice of human restlessness, and playing the part of dangerous abettor of world-wide ambitions. Faithful to no race after the manner of the kindly earth, receiving no impress from valour and toil and self-sacrifice, recognizing no finality of dominion, the sea has never adopted the cause of its masters like those lands where the victorious nations of mankind have taken root, rocking their cradles and setting up their gravestones. He—man or people—who, putting his trust in the friendship of the sea, neglects the strength and cunning of his right hand, is a fool! As if it were too great, too mighty for common virtues, the ocean has no compassion, no faith, no law, no memory. Its fickleness is to be held true to men's purposes only by an undaunted resolution and by a sleepless, armed, jealous vigilance, in which, perhaps, there has always been more hate than love. *Odi et amo* may well be the confession of those who consciously or blindly have surrendered their existence to the fascination of the sea. All the tempestuous passions of mankind's young days, the love of loot and the love of glory, the love of adventure and the love of danger, with the great love of the unknown and vast dreams of dominion and power, have passed like images reflected from a mirror, leaving no record upon the mysterious face of the sea. Impenetrable and heartless, the sea has given nothing of itself to the suitors for its precarious favours. Unlike the earth, it cannot be subjugated at any cost of patience and toil. For all its fascination that has lured so many to a violent death, its immensity has never been loved as the mountains, the plains, the desert itself, have been loved.

Knocked Down—II

Men were slipping down while trying to dig their fingers into the planks, others jammed in corners, rolled enormous eyes. They all yelled unceasingly. "The masts! Cut! Cut!" A black squall howled low over the ship, that lay on her side with the weather yardarms pointing to the clouds; while the tall masts, inclined nearly to the horizon, seemed to be of an immeasurable length. The carpenter let go his hold, rolled against the skylight, and began to crawl to the cabin entrance, where a big axe was kept ready for just such an emergency. At that moment the topsail sheet parted; the end of the heavy chain racketed aloft, and sparks of red fire streamed down through the flying sprays. The sail flapped once with a jerk that seemed to tear our hearts out through our teeth, and instantly changed into a bunch of fluttering narrow ribbons that tied themselves into knots and became quiet along the yard. Captain Allistoun struggled, managed to stand up with his face near the deck, upon which men swung on the ends of ropes, like nest robbers upon a cliff. One of his feet was on somebody's chest, his face was purple, his lips moved. He yelled



also, he yelled, bending down: "No! No!" Mr. Baker, one leg over the binnacle-stair, roared out, "Did you say no? Not yet?" He shook his head madly. "No! No!" Between his legs the crawling carpenter heard, collapsed at once, and lay full length to the angle of the skylight. Voices took up the shout— "No! No!" Then all became still. They waited for the ship to turn over altogether, and shake them out into the sea; and upon the terrific noise of wind and sea not a murmur of remonstrance came out from those men, who each would have given ever so many years of life to see "them damned sticks go overboard!" They all believed it their only chance; but a little hard-faced man shook his gray head and shouted "No!" without giving them as much as a glance. They were silent, and gasped. They gripped rails, they had wound ropes—ends under their arms; they clatched ringbolts, they crawled in heaps where there was foothold; they held on with both arms, hooked themselves to anything to windward with elbows, with chins, almost with their teeth; and some, unable to crawl away from where they had been flung, felt the sea leap up, striking against their backs as they struggled upwards. Singleton had stuck to the wheel. His hair flew out in the wind; the gale seemed to take its life-long adversary by the beard and shake his old head. He wouldn't let go, and, with his knees forced between the spokes, flew up and down like a man on a bough. As Death appeared unready, they began to look about. Donkin, caught by one foot in a loop of some rope, hung, head down, below us, and yelled, with his face to the deck: "Cut! Cut!" Two men lowered themselves cautiously to him; others hauled on the rope. They caught him up, shoved him into a safer place, held him. He shouted curses at the master, shook his fist at him with horrible blasphemies, called upon us in filthy words to "Cut! Don't mind that murdering fool! Cut, some of you!" One of his rescuers struck him a backhanded blow over the mouth; his head banged on the deck, and he became suddenly very quiet, with a white face, breathing hard, and with a few drops of blood trickling from his cut lip. . . . Mr. Baker crawled along the line of men, asking: "Are you all there?" and looking them over. Some blinked vacantly, others shook convulsively, Wamibo's head hung over his breast; and in painful attitudes, cut by lashings, exhausted with clutching, screwed up in corners, they breathed heavily. Their lips twitched, and at every sickening heave of the overturned ship they opened them wide as if to shout. The cook, embracing a wooden stanchion, unconsciously repeated a prayer. In every short interval of the fiendish

noises around he could be heard there, without cap or slippers, imploring in that storm the Master of our lives not to lead him into temptation. Soon he also became silent. In all that crowd of cold and hungry men, waiting wearily for a violent death, not a voice was heard, they were mute, and in somber thoughtfulness listened to the horrible inspirations of the gale.

Hours passed. They were sheltered by the heavy inclination of the ship from the wind that rushed in one long unbroken moan above their heads; but cold rain showers fell at times into the uneasy calm of their refuge. Under the torment of that new infliction a pair of shoulders would writhe a little, Teeth chattered. The sky was clearing, and bright sunshine gleamed over the ship. After every burst of battering seas, vivid and fleeting rainbows arched over the drifting hull in the flick of sprays. The gale was ending in a clear blow, which gleamed and cut like a knife. Between two bearded shellbacks Charley, fastened with somebody's long muffler to a deck ringbolt, wept quietly, with rare tears wrung out by bewilderment, cold, hunger, and general misery. One of his neighbors punched him in the ribs, asking roughly: "What's the matter with your cheek? In fine weather there's no holding you, youngster." Turning about with prudence he worked himself out of his coat and threw it over the boy. The other man closed up, muttering: "Twill make a bloomin' man of you, sonny." They flung their arms over and pressed against him. Charley drew his feet up and his eyelids dropped. Sighs were heard, as men, perceiving that they were not to be "drowned in a hurry," tried easier positions. Mr. Creighton, who had hurt his leg, lay amongst us with compressed lips. Some fellows belonging to his watch set about securing him better. Without a word or a glance he lifted his arms one after another to facilitate the operation, and not a muscle moved in his stern, young face. They asked him with solicitude: "Easier now, sir?" He answered with a curt: "That'll do." He was a hard young officer, but many of his watch used to say they liked him well enough because he had "such a gentlemanly way of damning us up and down the deck." Others, unable to discern such fine shades of refinement, respected him for his smartness. For the first time since the ship had gone on her beam ends Captain Allistoun gave a short glance down at his men. He was almost upright—one foot against the side of the skylight, one knee on the deck; and with the end of the vang round his waist swung back and forth with his gaze fixed ahead, watchful, like a man looking out for a sign. Before his eyes the ship, with half her deck



below water, rose and fell on heavy seas that rushed from under her flashing in the cold sunshine. We began to think she was wonderfully buoyant—considering.

On the black sky the stars, coming out, gleamed over an inky sea that, speckled with foam, flashed back at them the evanescent and pale light of a dazzling whiteness born from the black turmoil of the waves. Remote in the eternal calm they glittered hard and cold above the uproar of the earth; they surrounded the vanquished and tormented ship on all sides: more pitiless than the eyes of a triumphant mob, and as unapproachable as the hearts of men.

The icy south wind howled exultingly under the somber splendor of the sky. The cold shook the men with a resistless violence as though it had tried to shake them to pieces. Short moans were swept unheard off the stiff lips. Some complained in mutters of "not feeling themselves below the waist"; while those who had closed their eyes, imagined they had a block of ice on their chests. Others, alarmed at not feeling any pain in their fingers, beat the deck feebly with their hands—obstinate and exhausted.

Knocked Down—III

"They've got some hot coffee . . . Bosun got it. . . . No! Where?" "It's coming! Cook made it."

The hot drink helped us through the bleak hours that preceded the dawn. The sky low by the horizon took on the delicate tints of pink and yellow like the inside of a rare shell. And higher, where it glowed with a pearly sheen, a small black cloud appeared, like a forgotten fragment of the night set in a border of dazzling gold. The beams of light skipped on the crests of waves. The eyes of men turned to the eastward. The sunlight flooded their weary faces. They were giving themselves up to fatigue as though they had done forever with their work. On Singleton's black oilskin coat the dried salt glistened like hoar frost. He hung on by the wheel, with open and lifeless eyes. Captain Allistoun, unblinking, faced the rising sun. His lips stirred, opened for the first time in twenty-four hours, and with a fresh firm voice he cried, "Wear ship!"

The commanding sharp tones made all these torpid men start like a sudden flick of a whip. Then again, motionless where they lay, the force of habit made some of them repeat the order in hardly audible murmurs. Captain Allistoun glanced down at his crew, and several, with fumbling fingers and hopeless movements, tried to cast themselves adrift. He repeated impatiently, "Wear ship! Now then, Mr. Baker, get the men along. What's the matter with them?" "Wear ship. Do you hear there? Wear ship!" thundered out the boatswain suddenly. His voice seemed to break through a deadly spell. Men began to stir and crawl. "I want the fore topmast staysail run up smartly," said the master, very loudly; "if you can't manage it standing up you must do it lying down—that's all. Bear a hand!" "Come along! Let's give the old girl a chance," urged the boatswain. "Aye! aye! Wear ship!" exclaimed quavering voices. The fore-castle men, with reluctant faces, prepared to go forward. Mr. Baker pushed ahead grunting on all fours to show the way, and they followed him over the break. The others lay still with a vile hope in their hearts of not being required to move till they got saved or drowned in peace.

After some time they could be seen forward appearing on the fore-castle head, one by one in unsafe attitudes, hanging on to the rails, clambering over the anchors, embracing the crosshead of the windlass or hugging the fore-cast-pan. They were restless with strange exertions, waved their arms, knelt, lay flat down, staggered up, seemed to strive their hardest to go overboard.

Suddenly a small white piece of canvas fluttered amongst them, grew larger, beating. Its narrow head rose in jerks—and at last it stood distended and triangular in the sunshine. "They have done it!" cried the voices aft. Captain Allistoun let go the rope he had round his wrist and rolled to leeward headlong. He could be seen casting the lee main braces off the pins while the backwash of waves splashed over him. "Square the main yard!" he shouted up to us—who stared at him in wonder. We hesitated to stir. "The main brace, men. Haul! haul anyhow! Lay on your backs and haul!" he screeched, half-drowned down there. We did not believe we could move the main yard, but the strongest and the less discouraged tried to execute the order. Others assisted halfheartedly. Singleton's eyes blazed suddenly as he took a fresh grip of the spokes. Captain Allistoun fought his way up to windward. "Haul, men! Try to move it! Haul, and help the ship." His hard face worked suffused and furious. "Is she going off, Singleton?" he cried. "Not a move yet, sir," croaked the old seaman in a horribly hoarse voice. "Watch the helm, Singleton," spluttered the master. "Haul, men! Have you no more strength than rats? Haul, and earn your salt." Mr. Creighton, on his back, with a swollen leg and a face as white as a piece of paper, blinked his eyes, his bluish lips twitched. In the wild scramble men grabbed at him, crawled over his hurt leg, knelt on his chest. He kept perfectly still, setting his teeth without a moan, without a sigh. The master's ardor, the cries of that silent man inspired us. We hauled and hung in bunches on the rope. We heard him say with violence to Donkin, who sprawled abjectly on his stomach, "I will brain you with this belaying pin if you don't catch hold of the brace," and that victim of men's injustice, cowardly and cheeky, whimpered: "Are you goin' ter murder hus now," while with sudden desperation he gripped the rope. Men sighed, shouted, hissed meaningless words, groaned. The yards moved, came slowly square against the wind, that hummed loudly on the yardarms. "Going off, sir," shouted Singleton, "she's just started." "Catch a turn with that brace. Catch a turn!" clamored the master. Mr. Creighton, nearly suffocated and unable to move, made a mighty effort, and with his left hand managed to nip the rope. "All fast!" cried someone. He closed his eyes as if going off into a swoon, while huddled together about the brace we watched with scared looks what the ship would do now.



Knocked Down—v

the pump rods, clanking, stamped in short jumps while the wheels turned smoothly, with great speed, at the foot of the innmast, flinging back and forth with a regular impetuosity two clusters of men clinging to the handles. They abandoned themselves, swaying from the hip with twitching faces and stony

The carpenter, sounding from time to time, exclaimed mechanically: "Shake her up! Keep her going!" Mr. Baker could not speak, but found his voice to shout, and under the goad of his suggestions, men looked to the lashings, dragged out new sails, thinking themselves unable to move, carried heavy blocks overhauled the gear. They went up the rigging with faltering desperate efforts. Their heads swam as they shifted their feet, lepped blindly on the yards like men in the dark, or trusted their lives to the first rope to hand with the negligence of exhaustion. The narrow escapes from falls did not disturb the rapid beat of their hearts, the roar of the seas seething far from them sounded continuous and faint like an indistinct noise in another world: the wind filled their eyes with tears, and with their hands tried to push them off from where they swayed in their positions. With streaming faces and blowing hair they dived down between sky and water, bestriding the ends of the yards, crouching on foot ropes, embracing lifts to have their feet steady or standing up against chain ties. Their thoughts

floated vaguely between the desire of rest and the desire of life, while their stiffened fingers cast off head-earrings, fumbled for knives, or held with tenacious grip against the violent shocks of the beating canvas. They glared savagely at one another, made frantic signs with one hand while they held their life in the other, looked down on the narrow strip of flooded deck, shouted along to leeward: "Light-to!" . . . "Haul out!" . . . "Make fast!" Their lips moved, their eyes started, furious and eager with the desire to be understood, but the wind tossed their words unheard upon the disturbed sea. In an unendurable and unending strain they worked like men driven by a merciless dream to toil in an atmosphere of ice or flame. They burnt and shivered in turns. Their eyeballs smarted as if in the smoke of a conflagration; their heads were ready to burst with every shout. Hard fingers seemed to grip their throats. At every roll they thought: Now I must let go. It will shake us all off—and thrown about aloft they cried wildly: "Look out there—catch the end." "Reeve clear." . . . "Turn this block. . . ." They nodded desperately; shook infuriated faces, "No! No! From down up." They seemed to hate one another with a deadly hate. The longing to be done with it all gnawed their breasts, and the wish to do things well was a burning pain.





A Halyard Chantey

All hands were called to make sail, and as we manned the main tops'l halyards Jimmy Marshall jumped to the pin rail, and with one leg over the top of the bulwark, he faced the line of men tailing along the deck.

"A chantey, boys!" shouted Mr. Stoddard as he took his place "beforehand" on the rope. "Come now, run her up, lads. Up! Up!" sound of the creaking parral, the complaining of the blocks, and the haunting deep sea tune of "Blow the Man Down," greatest of all the two haul chanties.

JIMMY—"Now rouse her right up boys for Liverpool town."

SAILORS—"Go way—way—blow the man down."

JIMMY—"We'll blow the man up and blow the man down."

SAILORS—"Oh, give us some time to blow the man down."

JIMMY—"We lay off the Island of Maderdegascar."

SAILORS—"Hi! Ho! Blow the man down."

JIMMY—"We lowered three anchors to make her hold faster."

SAILORS—"Oh, give us some time to blow the man down."

CHORUS

*All hands—Then we'll blow the man up,
And we'll blow the man down,
Go way—way—blow the man down,
We'll blow him right over to Liverpool town,
Oh, give us some time to blow the man down,
Ho! Stand by your braces,
And stand by your falls,
Hi! Ho! Blow the man down,
We'll blow him clean over to Liverpool town,
Oh, give us some time to blow the man down."*

Old Marshall faced to windward, his mustache lifting in the breeze, the grey weather worn fringe of hair bending up over his battered nose. He always sang with a full quid in his cheek, and the absence of several front teeth helped to give a peculiar deep-sea quality to his voice.



Eight Bells

Four double strokes repeated on the bells,
And then away, away the shufflers go
Aft to the darkness where the ruler dwells,
Where by the rail he sucks his pipe aglow;
Beside him his relief looks down on those below.
There in the dark they answer to their names,
Those dozen men, and one relieves the wheel,
One the look-out, the others sit to games
In moonlight, backed against the bulkhead's steel,
In the lit patch the hands flick, card by card, the deal.
Meanwhile the men relieved are forward all,
Some in their bunks asleep, while others sing
Low-voiced some ditty of the halliard-fall,
The ship impels them on with stooping wing,
Rolling and roaring on with triumph in her swing.

Killing Time

I commenced a deliberate system of time-killing, which united some profit with a cheering up of the heavy hours. As soon as I came on deck, and took my place and regular walk, I began with repeating over to myself a string of matters which I had in my memory, in regular order. First, the multiplication table and the tables of weights and measures; then the states of the union, with their capitals; the counties of England, with their shire towns; the kings of England in their order; and a large part of the peerage, which I committed from an almanac that we had on board; and then the Kanaka numerals. This carried me through my facts, and, being repeated deliberately, with long intervals, often eked out the two first bells. Then came the ten commandments; the thirtieth chapter of Job, and a few other passages from Scripture. The next in the order, that I never varied from, came Cowper's *Castaway*, which was a great favorite with me; the solemn measure and gloomy character of which, as well as the incident that it was founded upon, made it well suited to a lonely watch at sea. Then his lines to Mary, his address to the jackdaw, and a short extract from *Table Talk*. (I abounded in Cowper, for I happened to have a volume of his poems in my chest.) "*Ille et nefasto*" from Horace, and *Grethe's Erl King*. After I had got through these, I allowed myself a more general range among everything that I could remember, both in prose and verse. In this way, with an occasional break by relieving the wheel, heaving the log, and going to the scuttle-butt for a drink of water, the longest watch was passed away, and I was so regular in my silent recitations, that if there was no interruption by ship's duty, I could tell very nearly the number of bells by my progress.



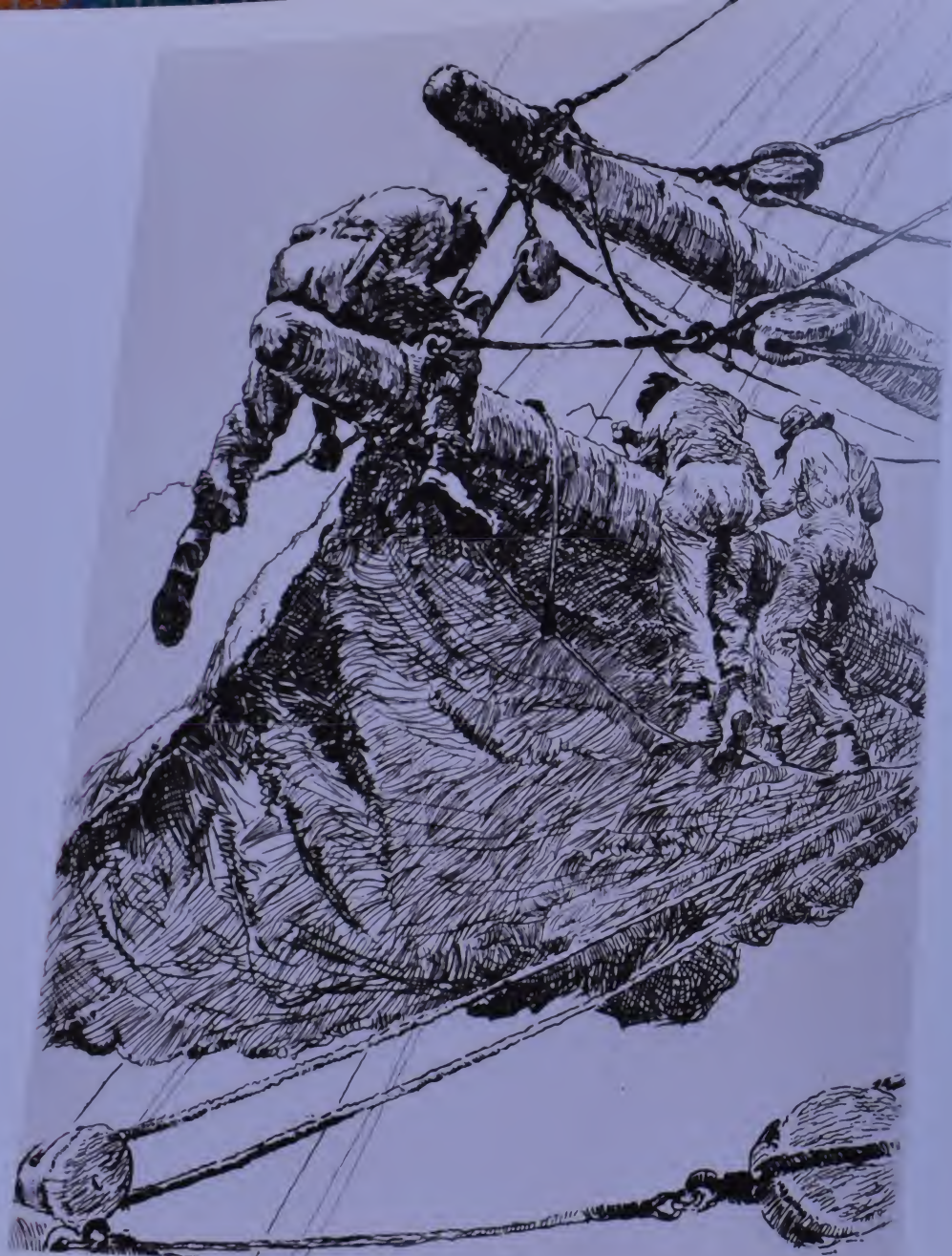


Scrub Down

Soon after eight o'clock, the appearance of the ship gave evidence that this was the first Sunday we had yet had in fine weather. As the sun came up clear, with the promise of a fair, warm day, and, as usual on Sunday, there was no work going on, all hands turned to upon clearing out the fore-castle. The wet and soiled clothes which had accumulated there during the past month, were brought up on deck; the chests moved; brooms, buckets of water, swabs, scrubbing-brushes, and scrapers carried down, and applied, until the fore-castle floor was as white as chalk, and everything neat and in order. The bedding from the berths was then spread on deck, and dried and aired; the deck-tub filled with water, and a grand washing begun on all the clothes which were brought up. Shirts, frocks, drawers, trousers, jackets, stockings, of every shape and color, wet and dirty—many of them moldy from having been lying a long time wet in a foul corner—these were all washed and scrubbed out, and finally towed overboard for half an hour; and then made fast in the rigging to dry. Wet boots and shoes were spread out to dry in sunny places on decks; and the whole ship looked like a back yard on a washing day. After we had done with our clothes, we began upon our own persons. A little fresh water, which we had saved from our allowance, was put in buckets, and, with soap and towels, we had what sailors call a fresh-water wash.

The same bucket, to be sure, had to go through several hands, and was spoken for by one after another, but as we rinsed off in salt water, pure from the ocean, and the fresh was used only to start the consequence. We soaped down and scrubbed one another with towels and pieces of canvas, stripping to it, and then, getting into the head, threw buckets of water upon each other. After this, came shaving, and combing, and brushing, and when, having spent the first part of the day in this way, we sat down on the fore-castle, in the afternoon, with clean duck trousers, and shirts on, washed, and shaved and combed, and looking a dozen shades lighter for it, reading, sewing and talking at our ease, with a clear sky and warm sun over our heads, a steady breeze over the larboard quarter, studding-sails out alow and aloft, and all the flying kites abroad—we felt that we had got back into the pleasantest part of a sailor's life. At sun-down the clothes were all taken down from the rigging—clean and dry—and stowed neatly away in our chests; and our south-western, thick boots, guernsey frocks, and other accompaniments of bad weather, put out of the way, we hoped for the rest of the voyage, as we expected to come upon the coast early in the autumn.





Getting Ready

All the first part of a passage is spent in getting a ship ready for sea, and the last part in getting her ready for port. She is, as sailors say, like a lady's watch, always out of repair. The new, strong sails, which we had up off Cape Horn, were to be sent down, and the old set, which were still serviceable in fine weather, to be bent in their place, all the rigging to be set up, fore and aft, the masts stayed; the standing rigging to be tarred down, lower and top-mast rigging rattled down, fore and aft, the ship scraped, inside and out, and painted; decks varnished; new and neat knots, seizings and coverings to be fitted; and every part put in order, to look well to the owner's eye, on coming into Boston. This, of course, was a long matter, and all hands were kept on deck at work for the whole of each day, during the rest of the voyage. Sailors call this hard usage; but the ship must be in crack order, and "we're homeward bound" was the answer to everything.





The Bell Buoy Speaks

"J. D."
9.6.1929

GEORGE C. WALES / RUDYARD KIPLING

*They christened my brother of old—
And a saintly name he bears—
They gave him his place to hold
At the head of the belfry-stairs,
Where the minster-towers stand
And the breeding kestrels cry.
Would I change with my brother a league inland?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*

*In the flush of the hot June prime,
O'er smooth flood-tides afire,
I hear him hurry the chime
To the bidding of checked Desire;
Till the sweated ringers tire
And the wild bob-majors die.
Could I wait for my turn in the godly choir?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*

*When the smoking scud is blown,
When the greasy wind-rack lowers,
Apart and at peace and alone,
He counts the changeless hours.
He wars with darkling Powers
(I war with a darkling sea);
Would he stoop to my work in the gusty mirk?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not he!*

*There was never a priest to pray,
There was never a hand to toll,
When they made me guard of the bay,
And moored me over the shoal.
I rock, I reel, and I roll—
My four great hammers ply—
Could I speak or be still at the Church's will?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*

*The landward marks have failed,
The fog-bank glides unguessed,
The seaward lights are veiled,
The spent deep feigns her rest:
But my ear is laid to her breast,*

*I lift to the swell—I cry!
Could I wait in sloth on the Church's oath?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*

*At the careless end of night
I thrill to the nearing screw;
I turn in the clearing light
And I call to the drowsy crew;
And the mud boils foul and blue
As the blind bow backs away.
Will they give me their thanks if they clear the banks?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not they!*

*The beach-pools cake and skim,
The bursting spray-heads freeze,
I gather on crown and rim
The grey, grained ice of the seas,
Where, sheathed from bitt to trees,
The plunging colliers lie.
Would I barter my place for the Church's grace?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*

*Through the blur of the whirling snow,
Or the black of the inky sleet,
The lanterns gather and grow,
And I look for the homeward fleet.
Rattle of block and sheet—
"Ready about—stand by!"
Shall I ask them a fee ere they fetch the quay?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*

*I dip and I surge and I swing
In the rip of the racing tide,
By the gates of doom I sing,
On the horns of death I ride.
A ship-length overside,
Between the course and the sand,
Fretted and bound I bide
Peril whereof I cry.
Would I change with my brother a league inland?
(Shoal! 'Ware shoal!) Not I!*



The Homecoming—II

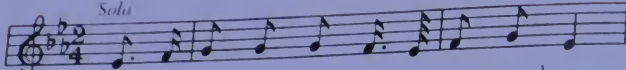
Colored pennants on Telegraph Hill have announced her coming to all who know the code. Topliff's News Room breaks into a buzz of conversation, comparing records and guessing at freight money; owners and agents walk briskly down State Street; counting-room clerks hang out of windows to watch her strike skysails and royals; the crimps and hussies of Ann Street foregather, to offer Jack a few days' scabrous pleasure before selling him to a new master. By the time the ship has reached the inner harbor, thousands of critical eyes are watching her every movement, quick to note if in any respect the mate has failed to make sailormen out of her crew of broken Argonauts, beachcombers, Kanakas, and Lascars.

The "old man" stalks the quarterdeck in top hat and frock coat, with the proper air of detachment; but the first mate is as busy as the devil in a gale of wind. Off India Wharf the ship rounds into the wind with a graceful curve, crew leaping into the rigging to furl topgallant sails as if shot upward by the blast of profanity from the mate's bull-like throat. With backed topsails her way is checked, and the cable rattles out of the chain lockers for the first time since Shanghai. Sails are clewed up. Yards are braced to a perfect parallel, and running-gear neatly coiled down.

The Homecoming-III

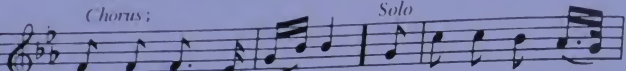
A warp is passed from capstan to stringer, and all hands on the capstan bars walk her up to the wharf with the closing chantey of a deep-sea voyage.

Solo



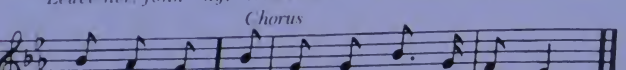
I, O, the times are hard and the wa - ges low;

Chorus; *Solo*



Leave her, John - ny, leave her: I'll pack my bag and

Chorus



go be - low: It's time for us to leave her.



Farewell

*They had secured their beauty to the dock,
First having decked her to delight the eye.
After long months of water and sky
These twenty saw the prison doors unlock;*

*These twenty men were free to quit the ship,
To tread dry land and slumber when they chose,
To count no bells that counted their repose,
To waken free from python Duty's grip.*

*What they had suffered and had greatly been
Was stamped upon their faces; they were still
Haggard with the indomitable will
That singleness of purpose had made clean.*

*These twenty threadbare men with frost-bit ears
And canvas bags and little chests of gears.*





Servant-Queen

*You swept across the waters like a Queen,
Finding a path where never trackway showed,
Daylong you coultured the ungarnered clean
Casting your travelling shadow as you strode.*

*And in the nights, when lamps were lit, you sped
With gleams running beside you, like to hounds,
Swift, swift, a dappled glitter of light shed
On snatching sprays above collapsing mounds.*

*And after many a calm and many a storm,
Nearing the land, your sailors saw arise
The pinnacles of snow where streamers form,
And the ever-dying surf that never dies.*

*Then, laden with Earth's spoils, you used to come
Back, from the ocean's beauty to the roar
Of all the hammers of the mills of home,
Your wandering sailors dragged you to the shore,*

*Singing, to leave you muted and inert,
A moping place for sea-gulls in the rain
While city strangers trod you with their dirt,
And landsmen loaded you for sea again.*





His Sea

Who hath desired the Sea?—the sight of salt water unbounded—
The heave and the halt and the hurl and the crash of the comber wind-hounded?
The sleek-barrelled swell before storm, grey, foamless, enormous, and growing—
Stark calm on the lap of the Line or the crazy-eyed hurricane blowing—
His Sea in no showing the same—his Sea and the same 'neath each showing:
His Sea as she slackens or thrills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise—hillmen desire their Hills!

Who hath desired the Sea?—the immense and contemptuous surges?
The shudder, the stumble, the swerve, as the star-stabbing bowsprit emerges?
The orderly clouds of the Trades, the ridged, roaring sapphire thereunder—
Unheralded cliff-haunting flaws and the headsail's low-volleying thunder—
His Sea in no wonder the same—his Sea and the same through each wonder:
His Sea as she rages or stills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise—hillmen desire their Hills.

Who hath desired the Sea? Her menaces swift as her mercies?
The in-rolling walls of the fog and the silver-winged breeze that disperses?
The unstable mined berg going South and the calvings and groans that declare it—
White water half-guessed overside and the moon breaking timely to bare it;
His Sea as his fathers have dared—his Sea as his children shall dare it:
His Sea as she serves him or kills?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise—hillmen desire their Hills.

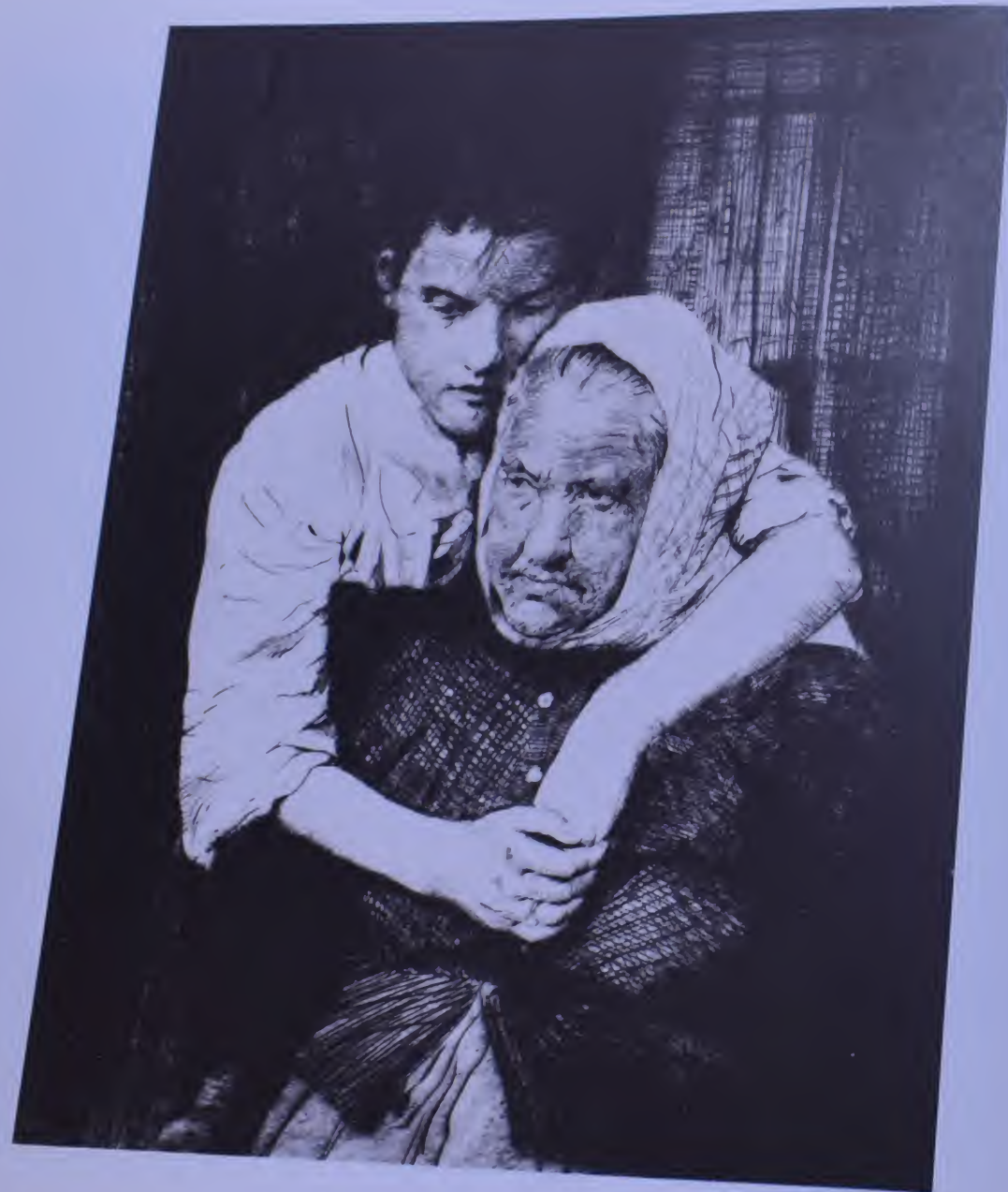
Who hath desired the Sea? Her excellent loneliness rather
Than forecourts of kings, and her outermost pits than the streets where men gather
Inland, among dust, under trees—inland where the slayer may slay him—
Inland, out of reach of her arms, and the bosom whereon he must lay him—
His Sea from the first that betrayed—at the last that shall never betray him:
His Sea that his being fulfils?
So and no otherwise—so and no otherwise—hillmen desire their Hills.

Sailor's Return

*The gray sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed in the slushy sand.*

*Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, through its joys and fears,
Than the two hearts beating each to each!*





Posted as Missing

"Have you news of my boy Jack?"
Not this tide.

"When d'you think that he'll come back?"
Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Has any one else had word of him?"
Not this tide.

For what is sunk will hardly swim.
Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

"Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?"
None this tide,
Nor any tide.

Except he did not shame his kind—
Not even with the wind blowing, and that tide.
Then hold your head up all the more,
This tide,

And every tide;
Because he was the son you bore,
And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!

Who Pilots Ships

*Who pilots ships knows all a heart can know
Of beauty, and his eyes may close in death
And be content. There is no wind to blow
Whiter than foam-white and no wind's breath
Sweeter than tropic wind. There is no star
That throbs with cold white fire as North stars do.
No golden moon-path lovelier than the far
Path burning on the sea when dusk is blue.
There is no rain so swift as rain that flies
In bright battalions with a storm begun.
No song that shakes the heart like amber cries
Of gulls with wings turned yellow in the sun.
Who pilots ships, when life's last heart beat stop,
Has drained the cup of beauty drop by drop.*



The Old Breed

*They cheered her from the waterside,
They watched her from the shore
Drop swiftly down the Mersey tide
Till she was seen no more.
Till, stately-swaying, tall and proud,
Her tower of sail grew dim,
And faded like a summer cloud
Beyond the far sea-rim.*

*They passed—like summer clouds they passed,
As fleeting and as fair:
The shapely hull, the soaring mast,
The speed beyond compare:
The hemp, the teak, the brasses bright,
The sunlit sails ashine,
The paint, the planking scoured and white,
The spars of glistening pine.*

*They passed—the ships, the men likewise,
The captains tried and bold,
The rich in love of seas and skies,
The mates of mighty mould,
The bawling bosuns heard afar,
Sea craftsmen, Chips and Sails,
The crews whose veins ran Stockholm tar,
Big-fisted, hard as nails.*

*Long turned their log-books final page!
Far South'ard now no more
Their royals dare the Forties' rage
As they were wont of yore,
No more, no more from Salthouse Dock
For lands of gold they clear,
Or, homebound, welcome off the Rock
The tugboat with a cheer.*

*What then remains? . . . The gulls, the breeze,
They bear from near and far
No word of Empress of the Seas,
Red Jacket, Shalimar,
But long as call the Mersey gulls
And Mersey tides do run,
The breed that drove the clipper hulls
Lives on from sire to son.*

*Clipper and liner, steam and sail,
The old law guides them still,
The ancient, stark sea needs prevail
Of courage, foresight, skill,
As when they ran the easting down
(Oh blow, my bully boys, blow!)
In clipper ships of old renown
Threescore long years ago!*





The Good Navigator

It hath appeared in our own time to do a little treatise on what is necessary to be a good and finished navigator, and on the qualifications that he should have.

He should not allow himself to be overcome by wine, for when a captain or a mariner is a heavy drinker it is not well to entrust him with command or control.

He should make the day his right and watch the greater part of the latter; always sleep clothed so as to be promptly on hand for accidents that may happen, keep his own private compass and often look at it to know if the course is being properly kept; and see that every member of the watch is doing his duty.

He must be in readiness for ordinary dangers, be they fortuitous or through ignorance or rashness, getting you involved, as running before the wind onto a coast, doggedly trying to double a cape, or pursuing a hazardous course by night among banks, tidal flats, shoals, isles, rocks, or ice.

He should be careful to keep the ship's reckoning, to know her point of departure, destination, position, where the land lies in relation to her, on what point of the wind; he should know what leeway she makes, and what she makes good on her course. He must never grow slack in these matters, which are a main source of errors; that is why, in all changes of wind and course, he should take great care to ascertain his position as near as possible.

He should be a good celestial navigator, skilled in taking the altitude either with the cross-staff or the astrolabe, know the right ascension of the sun and its daily declination, in order to add or subtract [from the altitude], to take the altitude of the pole star with the cross-staff, take the bearing of the Guards, and add to or subtract [from the altitude] the degrees they are above or below the pole star, according to the locality.

He should be able to recognize the Southern Cross when in south latitudes, add or subtract the degrees, recognize on occasion other stars if possible, so as to take their altitude when he loses sight of the former, or when he has not been able to take the sun's altitude owing to not seeing it precisely at noon.

He should be experienced in pricking the chart correctly, to know if it is accurate according to the meridian where he is, if he

can rely upon it, [and] how many leagues for each rhumb of the wind he must reckon for every higher degree. He should know the currents and tides and where they are to be met with, to properly enter the harbors and other places where he will have business, whether by day or night; and, if need be, he should be provided with good compasses and rutters for that object, and have seamen on the ship who know [those places], if by chance he has not himself been there; for sometimes the lives of the whole ship's company are saved by making use of these [currents and tides] in due time and place.

To know how to make charts, so as to be able to recognize accurately the lie of the coast, entrances to ports, havens, roadsteads, rocks, shoals, reefs, islands, anchorages, capes, tidal currents, inlets, rivers, and streams with their heights and depths, the sea-marks and beacons on the edges of shoals.

To know the Golden Number, the concurrent days of the year, the solar cycle, the dominical letter for each year, whether it is bissextile or not, the days on which the moon is in conjunction, on what day the months begin, how many days there are in each, the difference between the lunar and the solar year, the moon's age, how many degrees it traverses every day; what are the constellations of each month; how many leagues make a degree, north and south, how long the days are for each parallel of latitude; and how much shorter or longer they become every day, what are the hours of sunset and sunrise; what is the sun's daily declination, whether in the northern or the southern hemisphere.

One thing in dead reckoning should never be forgotten—to overestimate rather than underestimate the distance traversed; for instance, if the vessel seems to make two leagues an hour, give her one-eighth or more in addition, according to the distance covered by the reckoning and the length of the voyage; for it is better to be twenty leagues behind than too soon ahead, in which case one might find oneself ashore or in danger of shipwreck. If soundings are to be had off one's destination, one should begin to heave the lead a day earlier rather than later; and if having done so, one expects to find bottom, keep on heaving it every watch during the night or in fog. This is the way to avoid danger, for one cannot be too apprehensive of what one would not like to see, particularly since you cannot make that mistake twice.

The Honor of Labor

Now, the moral side of an industry, productive or unproductive, the redeeming and ideal aspect of this bread-winning, is the attainment and preservation of the highest possible skill on the part of the craftsmen. Such skill, the skill of technique, is more than honesty; it is something wider, embracing honesty and grace and rule in an elevated and clear sentiment, not altogether utilitarian, which may be called the honour of labour. It is made up of accumulated tradition, kept alive by individual pride, rendered exact by professional opinion, and, like the higher arts, it is spurred on and sustained by discriminating praise.

This is why the attainment of proficiency, the pushing of your skill with attention to the most delicate shades of excellence, is a matter of vital concern. Efficiency of a practically flawless kind may be reached naturally in the struggle for bread. But there is something beyond—a higher point, a subtle and unmistakable touch of love and pride beyond mere skill, almost an inspiration which gives to all work that finish which is almost art—which is art.





Master Mariners

The names of the clipper ship captains have gone down on the log of the sea with the names of their ships, an imperishable scroll. Gardner of the *Celestial*, Hollis of the *Game Cock*, Stoddard of the *Mandarin*, King of the *Racehorse*, Richardson of the *Stag-hound*, Farran of the *Eagle*; Dumaresq, one of the greatest seamen, commanded the following clippers—*Surprise*, *Bald Eagle*, *Romance of the Seas*, *Florence*; Miller of the *Dauntless*; G. B. Waterman of the *Highflyer*; the more famous Robert H. Waterman of the clippers *Britannia*, *Natchez*, *Sea Witch*, *Northerner* and *Challenge*. Captain Bob Waterman was a young shipmaster of unusually attractive personality, noted for his ability as a seaman and navigator, and for his power of command and discipline, a quality very necessary on a long voyage with hard-case crews and large numbers of strange passengers. Once, when serving on the *Britannia*, one of the sailors fell from aloft during a heavy gale. Bob Waterman dived into the sea and saved the man's life at the risk of his own. He was presented with a substantial testimonial by the passengers for his heroic act. He was then mate, and two years later was given command. He hung up many records as a seaman and made five voyages around the globe.

Then we must note Captain Lauchlan McKay, brother of the great ship builder, whose first command was the *Jenny Lind*. In his forty-first year he was a man of robust build, of exceptional attainments, a seaman of culture, and the author of a work on naval architecture when he attained command of that beautiful ship *The Sovereign of the Seas*.

A few more clipper captains might be mentioned—Limeburner of the *Flying Cloud*, Asa Eldridge of the *Red Jacket*, who made the fastest passage between Sandy Hook and the Rock Light, off the Port of Liverpool in thirteen days, one hour in 1854. This latter passage was of significant interest in that stirring contest between the fastest ships of sail and the early ships of steam.

A Collins Line steamer, which left New York two days before the *Red Jacket*, arrived in Liverpool on Sunday afternoon and brought news that a Yankee Clipper was just astern. Those were sporting days. There was intense interest in the performance of ships. When the news spread along the Liverpool waterfront people rushed in thousands to the docks; every vantage point was black with spectators awaiting the arrival of this incredible racer. Outside the port tugs had offered to tow the clipper, but she was going so fast they never could have kept their hawsers taut. She shot ahead, leaving them puffing and wallowing in her wake. The *Red Jacket* swept into the Mersey with everything drawing, presenting a spectacle of surpassing grandeur. Cheers burst from the thousands on the shore. The captain, Asa Eldridge, gave them a thrill they had least expected—he took in his kites, his skysails, royals and topgallants, hung his courses or lower sails, ignored the tugs that caught up and, throwing the *Red Jacket* into the wind, helm hard down, he backed her alongside of the berth without aid, while the crew took in sail with a celerity that seemed like magic to the spectators—a superb piece of seamanship!

A high degree of daring entered into the handling of the clip-

pers, daring bred of skill, and necessary if passage expectations were to be fulfilled. Almost any good seaman can carry on during the day, but at night, when the wind is high, sea lively, squalls always liable to sweep across the ship, seamanship and nerve must side with the command. The captains never turned in except "all standing" as the saying goes—that is fully dressed. What sleep they got was fitful and insecure. In stormy or thick weather they might not be out of their clothes for days on end. The officers led a life scarcely less rigorous, and crews, standing watches of four on and four off, were expected to tumble out at a moment's notice with the stirring call of "All hands on deck." It was a tense, exciting game. The clippers sped along with lee scuppers awash, hands at the halliards, the more important ropes being racked to prevent some weak ones from letting to when a squall bore them down and the singing wind and humming ropes and sails seemed to spell the end. At such times the "old man" was in supreme command and would stand on the high weather side of the poop, controlling the mountainous piles of canvas and defying the wind, using it to the utmost in the struggle for speed. Men have never since quite equalled this heroic art of sailing. Fast as we are, it is through machinery and not by the uncertain wind, the white squall, the rip of lightning, the roar of the sea, and the command of the tiller and gear and men that went with the rushing progress of the clipper ship.

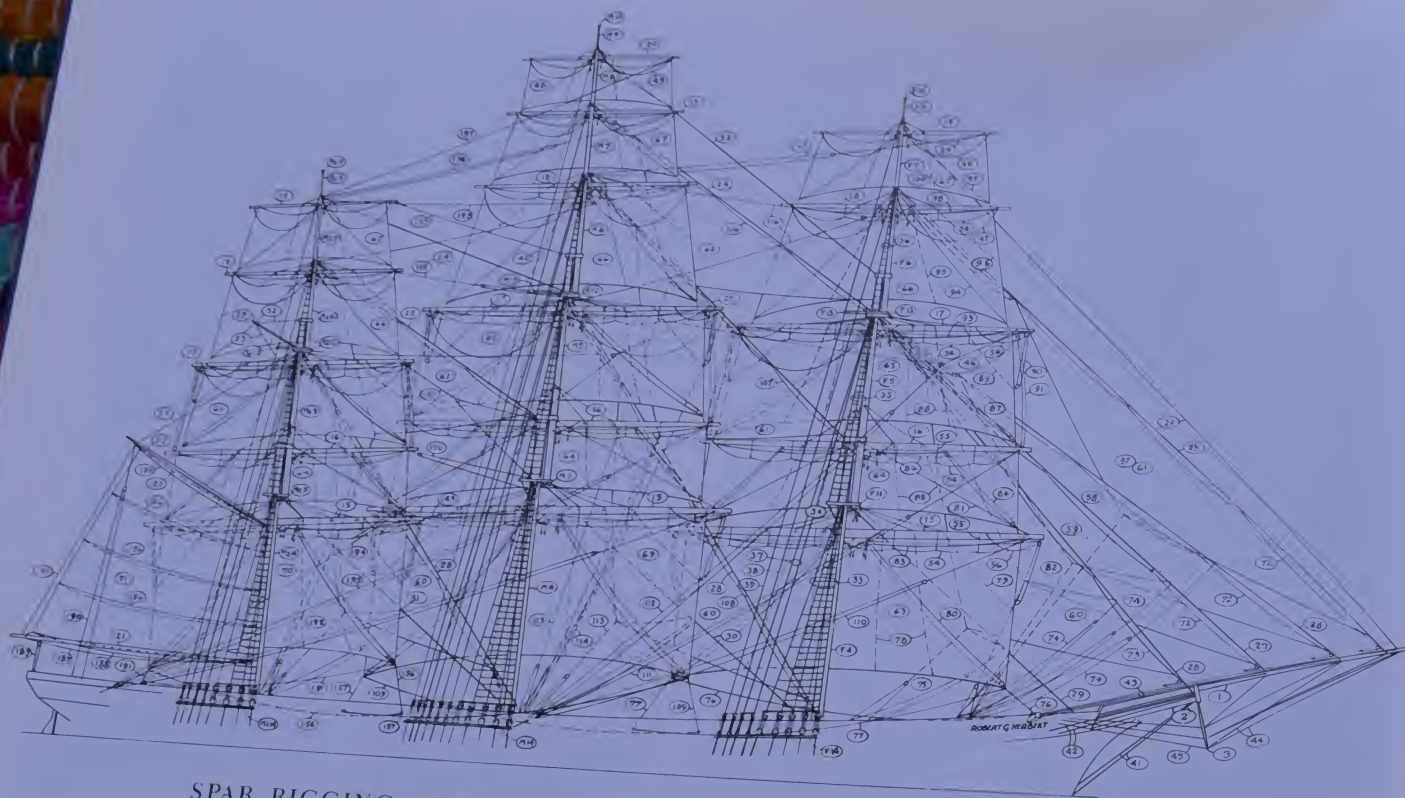
Sea-Fever

*I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn breaking.*

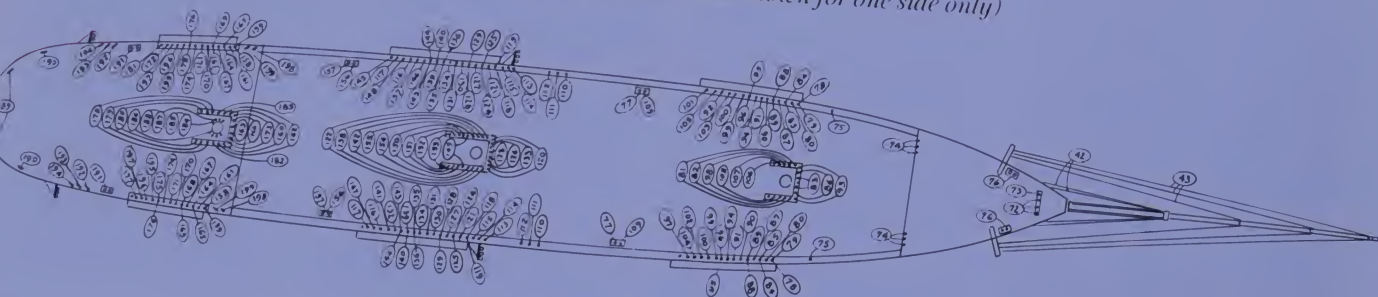
*I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gulls crying.*

*I must go down to the seas again to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's
like a whetted knife;
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.*





SPAR, RIGGING, AND SAIL PLAN (*Braces shown for one side only*)



BELAYING PIN PLAN



TELEPHONE
OYSTER BAY 357

2^d. June 1923.

EFFENDI HILL
OYSTER BAY, LONG ISLAND
NEW YORK

On leaving this hospitable
Country where the cream is
excellent and the milk of
human kindness apparently
never ceases to flow I
assume an ancient mariner's
privilege of sending to
the Owners and the Ship's-
Company of the Tusitala my
brotherly good wishes for
fair winds and clear skies
on all their voyages. And
may they be many!

And I would recommend

to them to watch the weather,
to keep the halliards clear
for running, to remember that
"any fool can carry on but only
the wise man knows how to
shorten sail in time"... and so
on, in the manner of Ancient
Mariners of all the world over.
But the vital truth of sea-
life is to be found in the
ancient saying that it is
"the stout hearts that make
the ship safe".

Having been brought up
on it I pass it on to them
in all confidence and
affection. Joseph Conrad.